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The Mysterious Spy;

OR,

GOLDEN FEATHER,

THE BUCCANEER'S DAUGHTER.

BY ARTHUR M. GRAINGER.

CHAPTER I.

THE twilight of an autumnal day, near the close of the year 1813, was softly blending into the first starlight, while the sky still glowed with the lingering blush of sunset. The October forests, gorgeous with the mingled dyes of the rainbow, had still light enough to reveal their glory, which rivaled the brilliancy of the opal, emerald, and azure tints which painted the evening clouds, that reposed like islands on the cerulean sea of the golden west.

The majestic Hudson reflected upon his broad expanse, like a glorious mirror, the skies, with their pictured cloudlets—the shores, with their painted woods, cliffs, and rounded hills; while here and there a sloop, with its great, white mainsail spread to tempt the idle zephyrs, was reflected upon it, inverted, like a vessel sailing on the other side of our world. The polished river was ruffled by no wavelet or wind-ring, and the craft which far and wide dotted its surface, lay upon it “like painted ships upon a painted ocean.” But the river was not entirely with-

out the signs of life. The swift swallows, wonderfully graceful in form and motion, as they fly in sportive circles, cut, with curving wing, the bright bosom of the water; the hawk, long suspended in the still atmosphere, as if gazing at his image reflected below, suddenly catching sight of the silvery back of a fish who swims too near the top of the water, folds his dark wings, and, cleaving the air like an arrow descending, cuts, with a sharp “check” the water, and, disappearing for an instant, reappears with his shining prey in his beak, and soars heavily away landward, pursued by the ever watchful and piratical eagle. The salmon also flings his silvery body out of the depths into the upper air, and, flashing in the light an instant, falls back with a heavy splash, which is echoed from the startled shores; while the shad in troops fling themselves upward and descend again, like a shower of silver money thrown upon the river; while, nearer shore, the minnows, in myriads, ripple the smooth surface as they dart hither and thither in the exuberance of their happy existence.

Beside these sounds, all Nature was still. In this sweet silence the stars came out, and hung their jewelry in the dome of heaven; and the moon put on her radiant tiara in the east. And so day had been transformed into night, by the most imperceptible change from the glory of one to the glory of the other, with no darkness between. The zodiacal light shot its triangular column of pale splendor far up the heavens, as if the extended train of the sun. Arcturus glittered like a Koh-i-noor diamond in the northern sky, while Sirius blazed far in the south, like the remote sun of remote worlds. The planets, lambently shining like lamps of gold, added their

calm beauty to the hour, while, over all, the galaxy—that belt of universes encircling the throne of God—lent the soft, far-off radiance of the blended glory of its myriads of starry suns.

It was an hour grateful to the heart, and to the soul. Such an evening finds a mirror in the true bosom of the true lover of Nature which truthfully reflects it. Man is created to reflect in his soul the whole of creation, and then only does it reach its end. Matter completes its mission only where it impresses itself upon immortal mind.

In this sweet evening hour, which we have permitted our pen to linger upon in describing, a maiden came forth from an old inn, which stood at the head of an ancient bridge that spanned a narrow stream, and bent her steps toward the later. Reaching it, she leaned over the railing, and placing her curved hand to her ear like a pink-lined shell, she listened, as if trying to catch some far-off sound.

“How still it is!” she at length said. “I hear no sound but a katy-did across the stream, and the gurgling of the tide against the piers of the bridge.”

She now gazed down into the dark water musingly. The framework of the heavy timbers was reflected equally with the bright stars in it, and her own form. Also the great oaks, that grew about the banks on either side, and the roof and chimneys of the antiquated inn, cast their images upon the flood. It was a scene romantic and striking, such as Claude and Rembrandt would have rejoiced to linger in, and transfer in detail to their canvas.

The stream over which the gray, rude bridge lay was a sort of estuary or strait, connecting the Hudson River with Harlem River, about three leagues above New York. This stream was about two miles



“FRIEND!” ANSWERED ROBERT; “AND DON’T BE QUITE SO READY, SHIPMATE, WITH YOUR BOARDING WEAPONS!”

in length, and very winding—varying in breadth from two hundred to five hundred yards. It was called by the ancient Hollanders, who settled the Island of Manhattan, "Spuytyn Duyvel Creek"—a name which has been rendered famous by the immortal pen of the great historian, Diedrich Knickerbocker.

This "Devil's Creek," at the period of our story, had in one portion of it thickly-wooded banks, at which point the great high-road from the interior crossed it by the bridge above mentioned, and led down to the city of New York, at the lower end of the island, which at the time whereof we write, was about the size of Albany at the present day—the whole intervening country of eight miles being wooded, with alternate farm-houses and villas, nearly to Bleecker street.

The bridge spanned Spuytyn Duyvel Creek but a short distance from the Harlem river, which was visible, shining in the broad light of the rising moon; while the Hudson was nearly two miles off—only glimpses of which were to be had from the head of the bridge.

The old inn had stood long prior to the Revolutionary War at the end of the bridge, and had been alternately honored with Washington and the English generals as guests. About it grew aged oaks, beneath which Hessian troopers had tied their war-steeds, and English officers had sat drinking sour Dutch wines, brought to them from the inn by "mine host" of that day.

From time to time, the maiden would wistfully gaze in the direction of the Hudson, peering through the heavy shadows that lay on the water beneath the overhanging oaks, making its limpid surface look like black marble. Hearing no sound, save from time to time the soft, quick, but musical whistle of the spotted-winged whip-poor-will, as it darted, bat-like, above her head, or its mate's mournful answer from some distant tree-top, she said:

"I fear something has befallen him! He was to have been here, if successful, by the first star-rising; and now there are a thousand in the sky. Hark! I hear a far-off sound. It is all still again! It must have been a fish leaping! How he lingers! Hiss! I hear a boat! It is oars! No; it was but the distant creaking of a boom of some sloop in the Harlem river."

She walked slowly up and down on the bridge. The noise of voices of guests, laughing or talking, came to her ear at intervals, from the open door of the near inn.

"Those noisy travelers! How can I detect a sound! Stay! I do hear the dip of oars! It is Robert! I know his rowing—so steady and even, so true and timely his oars fall!"

A boat was evidently coming down the stream from the main or Hudson river in the direction of the bridge. It was pulled steadily onward, as one could tell by the ear, for it was yet hidden by a curve in the winding shore. Nearer and nearer it came, as the increased distinctness of the sound showed; but after it had turned the bend, it could not be discerned for the depth of the black shadows which enveloped the banks close to which it was gliding invisibly along. But the eyes of the young girl detected its shadowy outline, and watched with the most intense interest its mysterious progress toward the bridge on which she stood.

"Heaven grant that he may have been successful!" she said, with earnest feeling, in a suppressed breath, as she hastened from the bridge to a flight of stairs that led from the end of it to the water-side. As she stood upon the head of the stairs, a ray of moonlight, coming from between the piers, fell broadly upon her face and figure. She was leaning with unconscious grace over the banister of the stair-flight, looking at the boat with eager expectation. Her rich, brown curls floated about her superbly-molded shoulders in a gentle evening wind, which the boat seemed to have brought with it from the Hudson. The soft reflections of the skies revealed the sweet intelligence that beamed in her dark, expressive eyes, which, at that moment, were increased in splendor with the light of hope. The warm color of deepening feeling heightened the native glow of her beautiful face, as, with her ruby-lips apart, her tall (not too tall,) figure gracefully inclined forward, watching the progress of the little bark. It was a "sweet apparition," that would have inspired an artist with an irresistible desire to transfer it, "alive and all lovely" as it was, to the heaven of his glowing canvas.

But the beauty of "fair Rosalie Lee," as our heroine is called, was of that rare kind which mocks the pencil. There dwelt a nameless grace and bewitching expression about her which, in the moonbeams illumining her, seemed almost spiritual. Her face was enriched by an expression so lofty, and pure, and noble, yet so sweet and attractive, that her soul alone could have lent it its radiant beauty. No pencil, however cunningly decked with colors—however artfully guided by the eye of genius, could seize, and hold, and duly express this reflection of her spirit in her face.

Yet, with all the qualities of a true woman, and a "future angel," our heroine was one of the most frank, happy, childlike creatures in the world! The clownish hostler at the inn was proud of her beauty and goodness, as he boasted of her over his tankard of beer in the stable-yard, while the highest officers of the army who stopped at the hostel toasted her with admiration and wonder. One gallant naval officer, who had that day dined there on his way to the city to meet the famous hero Perry, who was to receive an ovation in New York the next day for his victories on Lake Erie, had inscribed upon the window of the dining-room with a diamond:

TO ROSALIE, THE INNKEEPER'S FAIR DAUGHTER.

"Many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its fragrance on the desert air;
What happy youth shall bring this gem to light,
And plant in some sweet home a flower so bright?"

The smart, stout coachman—albeit he had a wife and half-a-dozen young Jehus, who drove the mail-stage every day to and from the city—expressed his admiration of the popular innkeeper's daughter by naming his new Boston coach "Rosalie," and having the name inscribed in gilt letters on each door,

inclosed by as much ornamental scrolling as is to be found decorating the "coat of arms" of an American "nobleman!"

For whom is she waiting? Is it a brother or a lover, whom she expects in this advancing boat, now almost close to the steps? And what is the intelligence she is hoping to receive by him?

The row-boat comes swiftly on, and a nearer view reveals that it contains two persons; while the young maiden no sooner perceives it to be the case, than she clasps her hands together with an exclamation of joy, saying:

"He is there! Robert has effected his escape! Brother," she called, in a low voice, "is it you?"

"Ay, Rose!" responded a bluff, yet somewhat rudely-toned voice.

"And is that he?"

"All right. He is safe here in the boat."

"Oh, thanks! thanks!"

The rower now gave a final pull with his slender oars, and shipping them by a skillful movement of both, so that they fell folded one upon the other in the bottom of the boat, like the closed wings of a swallow, shoved the bows which the next moment grazed lightly the lower step; and gliding on slowly, let the gunwale lie broadside to the stair foot. The oarsman—who had answered her—then sprang out, and holding the boat firmly, said to the person who was now standing up in the stern:

"Here we are, captain. You can step ashore if you choose."

The tone in which he spoke was, in part, respectful; and also, in part, sullen. We may say here that he was dressed in a nautical blue jacket; dark, full, sailor trowsers, and wore a jaunty little tarpaulin hat, with long, flaunting black ribbon hanging from it, after the fashion of the men-of-war's-men of that day. He was stout and heavily made, with herculean shoulders, and had a sun-browned face which would have been handsome, but for the fixed expression of reckless daring which contracted the heavy brow. He wore his black hair long and curling about his neck. His age was about four-and-twenty. The full moonlight revealed all this, as he stood steadying the boat, while the other person stepped from it.

This personage was the entire contrast of Robert Lee, whom we have just described. He was tall and slender in person, with fair, flowing hair, and light-blue eyes, large and expressive. He was a young man and handsome; but not so much with regularity of features as with the fine, ingenious expression which illumined them. He was closely wrapped in a cloak, and wore a brown felt hat, looped up at the side. There was a foreign air about him, yet his features were evidently American, or at least English.

He stepped from the boat to the foot of the stairs, and said, with deep feeling, as he caught the hand of Rosalie, which was frankly extended to him:

"It is to you, fair girl, I am told by your brother I owe my escape and my life! I know not how to thank you!"

And he was about to press her hand to his lips, when a movement with the rope, as if by accident, but evidently intentional on the part of the brother of Rosalie, jostled him and separated them. Robert, in effecting this, did not speak, but a smile of malicious satisfaction gleamed in his eyes at the result.

"Robert, you almost cast me into the water by your carelessness," said Rosalie; "but I can't reprove where I ought to reward and praise. How I do thank you. You are twice as dear a brother to me as you were before."

"If I am dear to you, keep your hands and cheek from every lip but mine, Rose," he said, with a singularly impressive emphasis, as he passed her to take the oars from the boat. "I have done this service, which I would not have done for any soul on earth but for you, to show you that you can do anything with me—that I am passive in your hands."

The stranger had paid no attention to the fall of the painter between him and the maiden, suspecting no purpose; and instead of kissing her hand, he grasped, with grateful warmth, the hand of his preserver, and thanked him with emotion for the part he had borne in his rescue.

"You need not thank me, captain! I have my thanks when I please Rosalie," he said, more roughly than the words would imply. "Now, Rose, what shall we do with this gentleman?"

"That I have fixed upon. I will tell you!"

"You are my preserver still, fair maiden," he said, in a pleasant, well-bred voice; "I feel I am to be indebted to you, not only for my release, but for my safety, until I can regain my frigate or country. But you shall not be unrewarded; nor your brave brother! No man could have showed more daring and skill than he has evinced."

"No thanks, sir! Come, Rose, what shall be done? I want to get him off of my hands!"

"The case! He will be safe there until I can think of some plan to let him go without fear of arrest."

"And who is to take him there?"

"You will," she answered, smilingly. "I know you will, Robert!"

"Well, what if I will? I dare say, next, you will want me to feed him there; and by-and-by, perhaps, take him to his ship, or somewhere else!"

"And why not?"

"Well! because you say it, I do it! I just tell him plainly, I wouldn't care a leather whistle whether he were hanged as a spy, or not! He is an enemy, and I am not acting fair and above-board to my country in doing what I have done to-night! But as I have said, Rose, for your sake, I would go down to—"

"Hist, Robert, silence!"

"I am not less grateful to you, Master Lee," said the young English officer, "for the good service you have done me. At present, I shall need further aid, and although I hesitate to trouble—"

"Do not speak of trouble, sir," said Rosalie. "I made up my mind to save you, if I could; and I do not mean to have it half done. Will you go, Robert, and guide this gentleman to the powder-vault under the old fort? Please do! I know you will for me!"

There was no resisting this appeal, made in tones of the most sisterly affection.

"Well, if I must, I must! Come, captain."

The stranger looked inquiringly at Rosalie, who said:

"It is a vault in an old fort, just below the inn on the shore, sir! You will be safe there until I can find some way of escape for you altogether."

"You are very kind. I am momentarily incurring obligations that eternity will not repay," he said.

"Well, if you're going, captain, there's no time to spare! I want to turn in!" said Robert, as he replaced his oars in the boat.

"I will see that you have everything," said Rosalie, as the stranger once more pressed her hand; and the next moment the boat shot away from the steps, darting under the bridge, and soon disappeared in the gloomy shades of the bank of the creek.

Rosalie had ascended to the top of the bridge, and followed it with her eyes, and then said:

"There he will be secure, at least, for a few days. I can trust Robert not to betray him. Yet how strangely my brother acts! How singularly he loves me! I am sometimes alarmed at his combined violence and tenderness. He absolutely behaves, at times, as if he were jealous of me. If he were my lover, he could not idolize me more. Fortunately for this poor young English captain, that I can control Robert, and get him to do anything for me. Yet, with all my wonderful power over him, I sometimes feel indefinable fear of him. He looks at me and speaks to me so strangely of late, that I have more than once fancied he was going insane. He needs kind words and gentle treatment from me, and I will not anger him for the world. He has such a dreadful disposition, too, that if once roused, who could calm him, or bring him to reason? How bravely he has acted to get the young officer out of prison. I wonder how it was done? Shall I learn it by asking Robert when he comes back, or by inquiring of the stranger?"

At this moment, a burst of loud singing fell upon her ears, from a party of travelers and soldiers in the inn; and Rosalie, as if recalled to the realities around her, hurried along the bridge, entered by a side-path, which led to a little garden-gate, and so made her way into the house by the trellised porch in the rear.

As she entered, a broad-backed, round-stomached man, with beetle brows and an exceedingly red face—with short-cut black-and-gray hair, which gave his head a bullet-like look, dressed in a green jerkin, and who held a cork-screw in his hand—met her, and said, with a tone of affection:

"Ah, May-dew! ah, pet squirrel! Where hast been roaming, hey? Out in the moonlight, I dare say, just like all romantic maids! Thou wilt take cold in the cold night air. Where is thy brother, that's ever away when I'd have him home? Since he took to the sea, he isn't worth a rope's end on land. Hast seen him?"

"I saw him but now in his boat, father! He will soon be in."

"Ay, and more out than in. He's no use to me. I hope these privateer's-men, some of them, will give him a berth. But come, my downy peach, let us take our supper, for it has waited us this half-hour. Nay, don't go out at that door, for there's half a dozen privateer's-men in there drinking my best brew, and plotting some devil's work or other against the enemy. I don't like thy fair face to be stared at by every fellow. Thou art my treasure, and I'll not let profane eyes gaze too freely on thy beauty, Rosal! Beshrew me, I do think breaking up inn-keeping for thy sake; for thou art too fair a lady, by my beard, for such a place as this. Come in to tea. Don't stare at thy old father so! I have but cracked a bottle o' Malmsey and one of Oporto with the captain o' the privateer, to thy health; for he saw thee, and swore by keel and kelson he had never beheld so fair a maid before, in inn or castle, on land or on the main!"

"Father, do not talk so of me, and to me! I will go to tea with you now." And the fair girl, who saw that her father was a little under the influence of his libations, led him into the side room, where the usual family table was set for them.

CHAPTER II.

We intend to introduce the reader into the room in the inn occupied by the "privateers," with whom our story will have something to do; but not just now. We have first to go back, and explain what led to the expedition of Robert Lee to effect the rescue of the stranger. In order to render a clear understanding of the events which led to his arrest, it will be necessary to return, a few weeks, to a dark and stormy night, when a traveler arrived at the inn, and asked shelter.

Old Adam Lee, the landlord, was in bed, and roared out louder than the wind that howled abroad, that he was in his night-cap, and would not unlock and unbar for priest or president on such a night.

"How, by my head! do I know it is not some o' the English that would come in, and take me prisoner, and my fair daughter captive?" he growled. "Heard I not that two frigates and a sloop were seen, not three days ago, skulking about Hell-Gate? Honest travelers, friend," he called aloud, "are got to bed in some honest hostel afore this! Dot wot! How know I but it mightn't be the old Spuytyn Duyvel himself, comin' here in the storm! No, no!"

"Fast bar a-night,
Fast find at light!"

That's Adam Lee's motto.

Without doubt, Adam Lee was a little "under the vine," as he was accustomed to term slight tipsiness; and so he turned over, and went to sleep.

But Rosalie, whose room was directly over her father's, had been awakened by the storm ere the knocking; and having listened to her father's growls, and through her lattice, by the flashes of lightning, seeing the stranger still at the door, she courageously and humanely raised her window, and called in a low tone—feeling in her heart it was too wild a night, in that equinoctial storm, for brute or man to be kept abroad. The voice of the stranger had a rich, pleasant key to it, a singular and pleasing mellowness, as he asked, civilly, for admittance, which, intuitively, told her that he was not one of the rough persons who sometimes disturbed the hostel, to demand a tankard of ale for their drunken midnight thirst.

"Who are you that travels in so fearful a night?" she said, speaking to him as he stood on the stoop, his wet cloak blown all about his face.

He heard, and looking up beheld by the lightning's constant glare, the lovely face bent down upon him; and instantly replying, said:

"I am a belated wayfarer, maiden! I should esteem it a kindness to be suffered to enter and await the passing of the storm, for no man can face it as it now blows."

"Which way do you come?"

"From the city."

"Art thou alone?"

"I am quite alone. I have gold where-with to pay for lodging; and if thou wilt let me in, sweet lady, I will pay thee triple money for my shelter."

"It is not for that I admit thee," she answered, feeling a strange thrill vibrate to her inmost soul, as he continued to speak. "I do it for pity and heavenly charity. I will come down and open to thee."

"May Heaven bless thee and all thou lovest," answered the stranger, as Rosalie, throwing about her a large shawl, lighted a candle, and descended with noiseless steps to the tap-room. This was silent, save a cricket chirping in the wainscot, and the cat purring in her father's leathern arm-chair; while in a cage, over the tap, started up a magpie, disturbed by the sudden light.

For a moment, after she had got into the entry and stood by the barred and chained door, she hesitated at what she was about to do. But she was courageous; and she was the inmate of a dwelling which was applied to at all hours by travelers, though seldom in such a storm as this. But there was something in the stranger's voice that had produced, she could not tell how or why, a singular influence over her soul. It seemed as if there had, till now, slumbered in her inmost heart a golden chord which, for the first time, this unknown voice had made to echo. Was it love? Was it memory? Had she heard the tones before? She could not tell, only she felt bound in a spell by it, as it were, and that she must open the door and admit him. There was also a curiosity to behold the face of the speaker with the magic voice, for possibly it might be only memory, and that she had seen him before; but it did not appear like a remembered voice at all.

So, with mingled fear and curiosity, and as if guided by an irresistible impulse, the fair girl softly unchained the door and removed the oaken bar. The wind dashed it open, and the stranger at once sprang in, as she called to him to do so, quickly. While she shaded the light from the blast, he forced the door to and secured it by replacing the bar. He then threw aside his cloak, heavy with water, and she saw before her a tall, fine-looking young officer in an undress uniform; pistols in his belt, and a short sword at his side. His hat was a slouched, naval, cocked hat, and dripping with rain.

"A thousand thanks!" he said. "You have done me a great kindness, lady, and more than you know; for you see my arm is broken!"

"Broken!" exclaimed Rosalie, with sympathy, directing her gaze from his deadly-pale face to his left arm, which hung helpless at his side. "How did you do it? Oh, I am so glad I let you in, sir!"

For a moment, the two gazed steadily into each other's eyes with that earnest, speaking, inquiring, half-recognizing look with which people who have never met, yet think they have, regard each other, only the next moment to turn away with locked hearts, conscious that they are entire strangers! One seeing them would have believed they were dear friends about to fly into each other's embrace. But at the same instant both dropped the eyes, and an expression of strangeness and formality took the place of that of half-friendship.

"I was thrown from my horse in the darkness, and when I rose to my feet, he was not to be found! The fall broke my arm. I found my way hither by the aid of the lightning; and but for your humanity, I should have perished, or suffered greatly abroad in the cold storm!"

"You shall not suffer here, sir!" said Rosalie, with tender feelings; and making him sit down in the little parlor by the entry, she lighted two of the candles which always stood on the buffet, and then hastened to the room of the doctor of the adjacent village, who lodged at the inn. He soon aroused himself, and without disturbing the "host," Rosalie calling one of the domestics to her, and in half hour the young stranger's arm was very surgically set in place and neatly splinted—Rosalie's own hands tearing up the linen into strips, and winding them carefully, but firmly about the limb. The services of the rural surgeon were rewarded with a gold-piece by the grateful stranger, who bore the operation of setting with a fortitude that Rosalie could not but respect.

She was now about to lead him to a room; but before following her, he said to the fair girl, in a low, cautious voice:

"You have a kind, good heart! You have done me a favor I know not how to repay. Will you do me another?"

She was already singularly interested in him, both from the mysterious instinct we have above alluded to, as well as from sympathy for his misfortunes; and she answered: "I will, if I can, sir!" And she dropped her eyes modestly beneath the gaze of his own admiring and earnest looks.

"I am pursued! I fly for my life! If I am taken, I shall be executed!"

"Oh, have you done a murder?" And she drew back with horror.

"No, I am not a murderer!—Heaven forbid!—but I can trust you! I am an English naval officer. I came, a week ago, on shore a mile below this inn, as a spy, to visit the fort in the harbor below. I was disguised by a common sailor's dress over my uniform. I had accomplished my object yesterday, and was about to return by land with the results, when I was discovered, having gone to a tavern by the dock at Cerlar's Hook to sleep, still as a sailor. I know not how I was betrayed; but three hours ago, as I was asleep with my disguise thrown off, it being with this dress—wearisome—my room was entered, and I was called upon to surrender. In a moment I was upon them, forced my way through them, pistol in hand, and leaping from a window, fled up the lane amid the storm. At the door of the quarters of some American officer, I saw a horse caparisoned, tied. I leaped upon him, and escaping the shots fired at me, galloped at speed from the town, intending, so soon as I reached safely Harlem River, where my boat awaits me, to release him. But I was thrown as I came out of Manhattanville, and you know the rest of my story. I have now, you see, in confiding to you my story, confided to you my life! I know not what feeling has inspired me to this dangerous confidence; but there is a sentiment in my heart which assures me you will not betray me."

"I am very sorry you have been a spy to plot injury to my country," she answered, warmly; "but I cannot betray you," she added, with feeling and in frank tones. "Your secret is safe with me."

"Even if I should be pursued to this inn?"

"They must not know you are here. I can hide you; but, then, your arm?"

"It is doing well. To-morrow I shall be able to find my boat, which was to come for me to-night at the mouth of this creek and the Harlem River, and I shall then soon be again on board my vessel!"

"Come with me, by these stairs. I will conduct you to a place where you will not be discovered by any one. To-morrow, I will let you have a disguise which will enable you to gain, unsuspected, your boat; when I hope you will resolve no longer to act as an enemy to my country."

"I ought, indeed, to become its friend, when one of its lovely daughters risks so much to insure my safety."

"Be careful of the steps! They lead into the wine-cellar; but there is an arched passage that goes a good way underground to a room, where they say once Captain Kidd hid his treasures; for on this spot was the abode of one of his buccaneers, who always dwelt on land to receive the booty his vessels brought in from sea. My father now keeps in it only his rarest wine and ale; and seldom goes to it except on some great occasion. We are now on the lower step. Follow me as quietly as you can; for I thought I heard some one moving up stairs."

In a few moments, the spy was guided by the young girl to the extremity of a long passage, which terminated in a small, dark room, lined with barrels covered with mold and cobwebs.

"It is a damp and cold place, sir," she said.

"Better than the grave," he answered, pleasantly, "which is the alternative."

"But it will be only till morning. I will come as soon as I can to let you out."

"Thanks—a thousand thanks, noble girl! I shall never forget your kindness. I know not what it is that makes me feel toward you as if I had known you all my life; there must be, I doubt not, something congenial in our natures. What is thy name?"

"Rosalie Lee. My father calls me 'GOLDEN FEATHER,' also," she added, with a smile.

"A sweet name, and just fits thee!"

"And thine?"

"Arthur Percy. I am a lieutenant in the British navy."

"I am sure you will never betray who aided thee, sir, when you get to your own vessel; for should it reach my father's or my brother's ears, I should suffer from their anger—for my father loves not the English, and my brother has just returned from a cruise, fighting at sea against your flag."

"I will never betray you," he answered, taking her hand. "How camest thou to be called 'Golden Feather?'"

"It was given to me by an Indian chief of the Delawares, who was here with a party of his warriors when I was a girl of eleven. He took a great fancy to me—said I reminded him of his daughter who had died, and whom he called by this name; and when he left—for one of his chiefs was ill, and he remained here nearly a week—he presented me with a feather of gold, which the French Governor of Canada had given as an honor to his grandfather."

"Have you the feather?"

"Yes; I preserve it as a valuable memento of the noble warrior. My father was so much pleased, that he gave him in return a Spanish dirk with jewels on it."

"Hast thou heard from the warrior since?"

"Yes. He does not forget me; but has sent me only last year a rich cape of gorgeous plumage, and called me his daughter in the message. He is now, with his warriors, in arms, fighting for us on the frontier. His name is Osco-wa-rah!"

"This is quite a romantic episode in your life, answered the stranger.

"Good-night, sir," she said. "I am sorry to leave you in such a place, and wounded as you are. I fear you will get no sleep."

"Never mind for a few hours—sailors often have worse quarters," he answered cheerily.

Rosalie then locked him in and hurried back, leaving the candle with the fugitive; and gaining the head of the stairs with a beating heart, she hastened to her room, rejoiced to find that the noise she had heard was only the shaking of doors and shutters by the wild winds of the storm.

The following morning, the tempest had ceased. The sun rose in cloudless splendor, and glittered from myriads of jewels of ice which, in the shape of knobs, beads, diamonds, and pendant drops, decorated every tree, and the eaves of the inn.

"I wonder what became o' the night-tramper, diamond o' my eyes?" said old Adam Lee to his nervous daughter, at the breakfast table. "It was a rough night for a human critter to be abroad, and I'm half sorry I—"

Scarcely had he spoken thus far, when a horseman, with jingling sabre, thundered up to the door, shouting:

"Ho, the house! Hilloa, mine host!"

Rosalie's heart leaped into her throat, for she feared it was the pursuers of the spy.

"What, by my bones! can't an honest man eat his breakfast, if he does keep a public hostel! Has every idiot that can bestride a horse's back, and can buckle on a 'spur, a right to bid me lay down my bread and knife and foaming ale, and open to him as if he were a lord! Go, daisy, go to the door, and see who is the villain that splits his throat, abroad this frosty morning, when he has only to alight and civilly come in. I'll leave my tankard while the bead is on it for no man. Go, Golden Feather."

"Ho, Adam Lee! come out an' thou art sober, an' tell me if thou hast seen a British spy stop here, or pass the road."

"Last night!" cried Rosalie, who had gone to the door quickly, in order to be the first to give answer, "some one called by in the storm, but my father would not get up to let him in."

"Marry, would I not," answered Adam, who hearing the inquiry about a spy, rose and went to his door, his tankard in one hand, and his bread and cheese-knife in the other. "Spies! They know Adam Lee would hang them to his sign-post without shrive or clergy, came one o' the fellows hereabouts! What! is it thou, Jack Spedden?—the wildest o' the new troopers. Come down from thy tall gelding, and come and take a stirrup-cup. I heard thou hadst given up drivin' the stage, and got to be a trooper. When wilt thou go to the wars and flesh thy broadsword. By my bones! since Captain Perry has beat the English so, at Erie, there'll be peace afore

you can wear the gloss off o' your blue jacket."

"I'm afraid so, Adam. But the spy! We found his horse at Manhattanville, and there are men living on the road who swear that they heard a man running by in the night, and some saw him by the lightning. He took this way."

"What and who is he?"

"A Britisher! News got to head-quarters as how a spy had been taking the soundings, and skulking about the fort and the harbor; and he was watched, and followed to the 'Best Bower,' and would have been caught, but he leaped from a window."

"I don't know of such a rogue passing here, unless it was he who halloed at the door in the storm; and a spy escaping for his life would hardly put up at a hostel."

"Not unless sorely put to it," answered the man. "But here comes my comrades!" As he spoke four other mounted men now came galloping us, and drew rein at the inn door.

"No spy here, by my bones, gentlemen!" said Adam. "A fellow called in the night, but went on when I would not get up; though he could not have gone far in such a whirlwind."

The troopers sat a moment or two, looking at each other in a state of indecision. Rosalie, anxiously, from behind the curtain of the window, watched their faces. When she saw them, at her father's invitation, alight and come in to drink a cup of ale with him, her heart sank within her. She, however, went in; and to be a listener, smilingly filled their tankards and gave them to them. They drank to her "fair face" all round, and then mounting their horses, were about to ride off, when Robert Lee, the man-o'-war brother, came out and said:

"Ho, shipmates! You are in chase of a spy, they say?"

"Ay, that we are! Have you seen such a hare?" asked the sergeant of the party.

"Can't say; only I saw, from my window, the old man here let in a fellow in the storm last night. But whether he was a spy or no, or whether he departed at once I can't tell."

"By the bones of my grandfather, Bob, you lie!" cried Adam Lee, with a purple face. "What has dragged thee out o' bed, lad, to tell this tale on thy father? Didst thou learn this on the sea?"

Robert looked at his father in surprise, and then said:

"I will swear I saw the man let in! I heard him calling, and got up to see who it was; and I saw a light in the door shine on him, and saw him go in! That I will take my oath of, father."

"By every bone in my body, boy, I never did it! If I did, it was in my sleep!"

"It looks strange to hear such opposite tales, boys," said the trooper called Jack Spedden. "It don't seem as if it was all right."

"You say the light shone on the man?" said the sergeant—"how did he look?"

"He wore a slouched hat and a cloak."

"The very man, I'll be sworn!" cried Spedden. The officer's horse he took had a cloak on it, which was gone when he was found. A slouched hat he had."

"I saw, as his arm was put out of the cloak, to hold the door open as he entered, bright spots like buttons shine on the sleeve."

"Our man!" cried the troopers.

Adam Lee regarded his son with amazement. He then laid his hand lightly on his shoulder, and said:

"Bob, did you see this all?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Did I hold the light?"

"I could not see who held the light."

"Hear that, gentlemen friends!"

"No matter who held the light, boys," said the sergeant. "Here was a man let in here last night—this young fellow swears to it. The host denies it. I don't want to injure any man by suspicion, especially Adam Lee, who is known far and wide. But the best o' men have their weak side. The spy was an officer—he had gold. We can all be bribed."

"Do you mean, you villain!" cried Adam, "that I concealed the spy!"

"It looks very like it," answered Jack Spedden. "A man was admitted into your house just about the hour our spy might have got here. Your son saw him come in, and you deny it."

"Well, if he came in, I did not admit him.

Rose! where are you Rose. Ho, Golden Feather! Call your sister, Robert—she might have come down (for she has a pitiful heart, gentlemen) and let him in; if so, I know nothing of it. I have seen no one go forth this morning. Call Rosalie."

The maiden, who had overheard all the conversation, and had given over the interesting young spy as lost, was trembling and trying to think what she should do to save him; when her brother entered the room and said, grimly, but with courtesy:

"Rose, my father calls you."

"I heard him! Robert, do you love me?" she cried, earnestly.

"With all my heart! Never was love like mine for a sister," he said. And seeing she looked distressed, he asked, with tender interest: "What is the matter?"

"May I trust you?"

"With your life!"

"And with the life of another?"

"Yes!"

"The spy is in this house—I let him in! I promised to protect him!"

"Where is he?"

"Concealed in the far wine-chamber."

"This known would hang you and my father."

"I know it; but I think only of his safety. Hark! they will search the house—my father has invited them to do so, to clear himself. Now, if you love me, brother, save this stranger!"

"I will try to, for your sake. How could you be so imprudent as to conceal him?"

"He came to the door, weak with a broken arm, and unable to combat the storm. He threw himself upon my mercy—I promised him protection. Be quick—here is the key! Go the vault and conduct him in safety to the forest by the broken well, which you can soon clear the rubbish from!"

"If I do this?"

"I will bless you, and—"

"Love me?"

"Do I not love you—except when—"

"Except when?"

"Do not delay now to ask me—but except when you are sometimes so singular."

"Yes, I am singular. But they are coming in. For your sake, Rose, I do this! Remember it, for I shall remember."

The troopers had alighted; for Adam Lee, getting no reply from his daughter, and seeing they suspected him, had sullenly told them to search his house. This they did thoroughly, even penetrating with lanterns to the distant vaults, led by the host himself—who began to suspect that it was very possible the man might be hid in his house; and that Rosalie had admitted him. When he at last had entered the secret vault, and found it empty, he felt greatly relieved; but his quick eye detected a change in the appearance of some rubbish which had closed up one extremity. But this was not apparent to the soldiers—who, after a careful search, returned again to the tap-room.

"We are satisfied he is not here now, Adam," said Jack Spedden; "but I would like to ask Miss Rose a question, if she is to be found."

CHAPTER III.

The landlord proceeded to make a search for his daughter. She, in the meanwhile, was in the room, pacing it up and down, and deliberating how she should act in order to escape suspicion. Her feelings were fully roused by her sympathies with the stranger, and at every sacrifice she resolved she would not say a word to betray him. To betray her agency in his escape, would be fatal to her own safety, she was well aware. Her father though he idolized her, yet, by nature, was a stern man, and was capable, as she well knew from scenes with his guests, of the greatest violence.

"Rose," he called now, in an imperative voice; but, receiving no reply, he said, with an oath:

"She seems to have gone out, for I can't see her—"

"No, father, I am here," she said boldly, for she felt that to be frank and fearless was her only hope.

"Did you let a man in last night?"

"Yes, sir!"

The whole troop uttered a low exclamation; for a large reward being offered by their superior officer for the capture of the spy, they were animated equally by avarice

and patriotism to secure him, if they could get tidings of him.

"Who was he?"

"I never saw him before! He has gone again!" she said, as if she was perfectly unconcerned.

"Which way did he go?" asked the sergeant.

"He said he came from the city; and probably went on North; but I did not let him out."

"Who did?" asked Adam.

But she had left the room. The men then mounted their horses, resolved to divide and take the two roads before them. Jack Spedden apologized to the landlord, who replied with growls, sullen and deep, at being suspected of harboring a traitor.

He now went in and confronted Rose:

"How did that fellow leave? Who, in the name of Satan, was he? Why did you let him in? Where is he?"

"I do not know, sir!" she answered, quietly. "I went to my room and have not seen him since. Don't be angry, sir! I could not let anybody perish. How did I know he was a spy, father!"

"And we don't know it now, *Quien Sabe*, as the Spaniards used to say on the Main. You like to have got us all into trouble and had me hanged at my own signpost!"

The troopers had crossed the bridge, when they saw a man coming toward them, with a pair of doctor's bags on his shoulders. It was the village doctor, who had been roused from the inn before sunrise to visit a patient a mile off. He was hailed by Spedden, who, as the reader has been told, had been a resident of the vicinity before enlisting in the regiment then mustering in New York for active service in the war.

"Hilloa, doctor! Have you met a foreigner on this road? A fellow in a cloak and slouched hat, or heard of one such? We are after a spy!"

"Bless me, I set the arm of such a person in the inn, at twelve last night, and he gave me a sovereign for my trouble. He looked like an English officer. But I said nothing. A professional secret, you know. A spy, was he? Dear me! Well, I thought it was odd!"

"Set his arm in the inn?"

"Yes; at the Red Oak Inn—just there!"

"Boys, we were on the right scent," said Jack Spedden.

"A spy, is he?"

"Yes! a Britisher! Pocket-full of places and soundings to bring in the British fleet to take New York."

"Bless my heart! I wish I had known it. Is he gone!"

"We've searched the inn thoroughly. He's off again."

At this moment Robert Lee came up by a path that led down the river bank. He had a dark, malicious expression on his face. He had aided the spy in getting out of the vault, by the orifice of an old well; but when he saw by the light that he was young and handsome, and very gentlemanly, he seemed to take a sudden hatred against him.

"Curse him," he muttered. "For her sake, I will put him in the way to escape; but, if I had my own way, I would put the hangman's rope around his neck. Handsome and young! This is the secret of her interest in him! But I'll keep my word to her!"

So he bade the officer follow him through the garden and woods, and go down the creek shore rapidly, until at length he placed him securely out of sight of the bridge and inn.

"Now, captain," as he called him, "make the best of your way where you want to go: for I feel ugly, and may not keep in my present mind to favor you long: for it is not for your sake, but for another, I have aided you!"

"I feel it. I thank you. Here is gold!"

"Gold—give me none of your gold! Now, run for it. If you ever speak to my sister again, I will take your life."

The officer smiled at the menace, and then said:

"Farewell, then, sir! I must thank you for your services—will you nill you?"

Robert Lee then turned from him toward the inn, and soon came in sight of the troopers. He approached Jack Spedden, and placing his hand on the pommel of his saddle, said, significantly:

"If you wish to start an English hare, Jack, take that shady path down toward Harlem River! You will see tracks in the soft mud."

"Do you mean to say—"

"I mean to say nothing. A wink to a wise man is as good as a whip."

"Boys, follow me," cried Spedden, with animation. "Spur and whip like Satan! Lose no time! If there is game this way, he is running to cover!"

Away dashed the whole troop, while a malicious expression of thought gathered over the face of the sailor, as he turned to the village Esculapius and said:

"Doctor, if you wish to see sport and have something to do in the way of your profession, follow those lumbering, nigger-headed craft, who sit their horses as if they rode oxen."

"What is it?" asked the doctor, eagerly.

"They are after a spy! and as he is likely to show fight, you may be wanted either for one side or the other."

Thus saying, he moved off toward the Red Oak, as unconcerned as if he had no interest in what was going to take place. Without question he was a hardened young man, and his five years' sea-service had by no means humanized a naturally evil heart. All that seemed to humanize him was his love for his sister, in which there was blended a sort of chivalry, as if she were a maiden who had fascinated him, rather than one to whom he was bound only by the ties of fraternity.

"Bless my soul! Fighting! I must be on the spot! A spy! Wonder if it is the young fellow whose arm I set, and who never ~~thru~~sed, though I must have hurt him decidedly—seeing it was the first human arm I ever set, besides a cat's fore-paw. But I did remarkably well. Good fee! would do it again! Must hasten to the place and see what is going on! May be wanted! If there is firing, I will keep out of range till all danger is over, and then run up with tourniquet and bandages!"

Thus soliloquizing, the little round man went off at a trot down the path taken by the troopers. He knew it would ere long come to the mouth of the creek, and if anything was to be done in the way of fighting ahead, it would soon commence.

We now return to Arthur Percy, the spy. After Rose left him, he soon became overcome with fatigue, and fell asleep in his hiding-chamber upon the casks of ale. He had slept several hours, when he was awakened by a noise at his door-lock; and starting up, with his hand, soldier-like, upon his pistol-butt, he awaited the result. It might be the fair maid of the Inn; it might be a foe! He saw that it was day. His candle had long since burned down in the socket; but the light of morning streamed in through a crevice in the rear of the wall, which seemed broken. The door opened, and Robert Lee made his appearance, with a lantern in his hand! Percy sprang to his feet and presented his pistol.

"Friend or foe?" he demanded.

"Friend!" answered Robert; "and don't be quite so ready, shipmate, with your boarding weapons!"

"Who are you?"

"I am the brother of the young girl who was so foolish as to risk her neck to save yours!"

"She shall not go unrewarded!"

"To the devil with your rewards! If you care for your life, go to work and help me to remove these loose stones. I have promised her to get you out of this! Be active, for you have no time to spare. There are half a score of troopers at the door of the inn, and mean to search the house, for they know you were let in. One word: Did you ever see my sister before?"

"No!"

"Then never see her again! Come, captain, or whatever you are."

"I am only a lieutenant of a frigate!"

"A sailor! Then I have more respect for you than if you were a landsman! If you were not a Briton, at enmity with us, I would touch my fore-top to you, in honor of the quarter-deck. Heave ahead, sir! we must get you out this way!"

The young officer at once went to work, and the two, in a few minutes, had made a breach in the wall, which let them out into the depth of an old, dry wall. The sides of this were upgrown with brush, and trees grew thickly over the mouth. It did not take long for two sailors to scale the sides and stand upon the earth at the top.

"Now, sir, which way do you lay your course?"

"For the mouth of this creek where it enters Harlem River."

"Then follow me rapidly, and speak not!"

"I will obey your instructions to the letter."

The reader has already seen how Robert Lee led him toward the place indicated, and how, having literally aided his escape from the inn according to his promise to his sister, took the first opportunity of betraying him to his foes, whom, on his return, he found mounted and in full pursuit.

The spy was no sooner left alone by his guide and betrayer, than he hurried forward along the narrow path under the bank.

"If I can only get to the place where I landed six days ago, I shall there find my boat in waiting, and I shall soon be safe. I have run a great risk; and this young girl, with the morose and dare-devil brother, has saved my life! I shall never cease to remember her."

He soon came to the mouth of the creek, where the stream expands into the broader channel, where it takes the name of Harlem River. Here he looked eagerly into a cave on the right, where his boat had landed him the week before; and where, by agreement with his ship, it was to come in for him. It was not a ship's boat, but a whale-boat, captured by the frigate on the Nantucket shore, where it had been some weeks cruising, and manned by a crew disguised as fishermen. No trace of any boat met his eyes, save a small canoe tied to the shore, close at his feet; and on the other side of the river, half-a-mile down, a low-masted pinnace, containing three or four men, slowly coming up against the current under its heavy main-sail, aided by two heavy sweeps.

"Without question, the boat that was to come for me was blown off by the storm last night. In that case, it will be night before it gets into the river. My frigate is full ten leagues off awaiting me, cruising between the Long Island shore and the Connecticut main. Surrounded by foes and men in hot pursuit of me, my arm paining me almost to torture, I see no alleviation but to conceal myself in the woods until night, and wait for the boat's arrival! Hark! I hear the tramp of horses up the creek! Yes, I am pursued even here! My flight is discovered. One—two—five horsemen, armed! Now, Arthur Percy, thy last hour is come, it would seem! Sell dearly thy life!"

He stood an instant, pistol in hand, to receive the advancing troopers—for all of them were now in sight—thundering along the narrow beach on the extremity of which he stood unable to fly beyond, save into the river, which, swollen by the rains, flowed past dark and billowy in its swift strength.

"Stand and surrender, or you are a dead man!" shouted Jack Spedden, as he drew a pistol from his holster and leveled it at him.

The spy, without hesitation, fired his pistol at the trooper, who, crouching in his saddle, was unharmed, while the ball struck the man behind him in the forehead, and tumbled him from his saddle. Pell-mell the other horses rushed over the fallen man, and as the path was narrow, they were at once piled one upon another in a heap—horses and men mingled in wild confusion. Spedden, as he rode on, discharged his pistol at the spy, who at the same moment, with his right hand drew his other pistol, and fired it in his face. The hat of the spy was shot through, and Spedden's cheek was blown away, and with terrible curses he grasped his broadsword, and charged, all covered with blood as he was, upon the young man, who had only a light cutlass to defend himself with, and one arm also in a sling. Seeing that the dragoon was about being reinforced by two of his men, who had disengaged themselves from the others, obeying the inspiration of the moment, he sprang into the canoe, and cutting with his blade the rope which held it to the root of a tree, he launched out into the stream. Dropping his cutlass by his side, he seized the paddle, and darted swiftly down the stream. Shot after shot was fired after him, which passed harmlessly by, being discharged without aim in the hurry of the moment. In a minute, he was beyond the reach of their pistols, and fast escaping from them.

In all there were but seven troopers—albeit Robert Lee had told him there were half a score—and one of these was dead by the side of his horse; the little doctor standing over

him feeling his pulse, and shaking his bald head.

They were infuriated at the escape, having no means of pursuit, when the doctor, who had caught the war-spirit, said, pointing to the pinnace:

"Hail her! They will come to you!"

"A doctor is good for something besides mending bones!" cried Jack Spedden, with a great oath of delight at the idea suggested to him; and opening his throat, he shouted imperatively for the pinnace to pull across to where he stood.

"Bear a hand, men! You shall have five dollars apiece if we catch the fellow making off in the canoe. He is a British spy; and a big reward is offered for him!"

The pinnace was not more than six hundred yards off, and every word was heard by the skipper, a short, dumpy Dutchman, with a pipe in his mouth. In a moment, all was activity on board. The main-sail was drawn close aft, the helm put hard up to windward, and the jib straightened like a board, so as to lie close to the wind. The space across the river was soon run; and as the lugger touched the shore, Spedden and four soldiers leaped on board, the rest staying by the horses.

"Dunder and blixen, mans! I don't wanta bud won on board; ant where ish te vive tollar?"

"You must make sail and pull oar to catch him first, and then we'll pay you!" answered Spedden. Ease off your main sheet and jib, and head her down river! Out with two more sweeps. He is a quarter of a mile ahead of us. Make your craft go like the wind!"

The skipper obeyed with alacrity these rapid orders; and Arthur Percy beheld with dismay the well-manned pinnace coming down by wind, tide, and oar in full chase.

"There is no alternative but to escape to the shore again," he said; but being able to manage his paddle only with one arm, and the canoe, taking in water in a stream, was fast becoming unwieldy and threatening to sink. But with all his strength and skill, he sought to reach the eastern bank; but here the river expanded to nearly half a mile in breadth, and he was in the midst of the current.

The result was, that the lugger gained rapidly upon him, when finding that the canoe only hindered his efforts, he threw himself into the stream, and swimming along side of it with his hand on the gunwale, he propelled it faster than with the paddle. But his noble exertions were to prove fruitless. The pinnace came lumbering and splashing on, and Jack Spedden in the bows and brandishing a pistol in one hand, and his huge sword in the other, called to him by every opprobrious epithet he could command to surrender, or have his "brains blown out."

Seeing that he could not resist, and that unless he yielded he would be fired upon as the pinnace came within pistol-shot, he threw up his hand, and said:

"I yield myself your prisoner!"

The pinnace dashed alongside of him, and two of the troopers raised him from the water and placed him upon the deck.

"His arm is broken—don't hurt him, boys," said the sergeant.

"So, you have led us a pretty chase," said Jack Spedden, sheathing his sword, and laying his pistol upon a cask of fish by him. "I shall have the pleasure of seeing you hanged!"

"Where ish mine vive tollar—unt to more oder vive tollar for mine mens?"

"Hold your yawp, mynheer! How can we pay you till we are paid ourselves?" answered Jack. "Do you think troopers go about with bags of gold in their canteens? Be patient, and dunder and blixen, as you say, you shall have your pay! Now, pull us back to the place we started from."

"I must haf more tollars ifs I do."

"I'll give you leaden ones in the shape of marbles, if you don't put to your oars and set your sails to take us back! Do you see this long pistolet? I will give you a pill or two, old mynheer, if you don't go to work at once and bring us back."

It was a strong pull against the current; but in an hour the troopers were landed at the Point; and mounting their prisoner on the horse of the dead dragoon whom Percy had killed, the whole party were about to ride off, when the doctor, who had watched the chase and awaited them, insisted on seeing the spy's arm, the setting of which he said he saw by his pale face was not exactly right. So "feed-

den, who really took the command of the party, having more will and daring than the sergeant, gave permission to him to dress it, feeling easier afterward, Arthur smilingly thanked him and the whole party, then rode forward. They soon came to the inn, in front of which stood Adam Lee, Robert, and a large crowd who had witnessed the chase and capture from an eminence near, and now run down to see the captive spy pass.

"So, Adam, we have your man," said Spedden. "He showed pluck and shot one of our boys dead as a herring. It is Tim Ford! He lies under the old elm on the Point. See to him that he is buried, after the coroner has seen him. This young fellow will swing for it, if he doesn't as a spy! It is mighty strange, Adam, you did not know of his being in the house, and he had his arm set here, too!"

Adam colored. He felt both angry and alarmed; for he knew Spedden was a man of bad blood, and would, if he could make anything out of it, try and get him suspected of concealing the spy. He did not know how to answer, when—

"No, it was not father, it was I who let him in!" said the clear, musical voice in the door. "It was stormy, and he pleaded for shelter, because his arm was broken. I will take the blame, John Spedden, if there is any, for letting a man into a public hostel! It was I who called up the doctor to set his arm."

"But I protest, upon my soul, gentlemen friends, and fellow-patriots all, I did not have the least suspicion he was a spy. It was a compound fracture, and as pretty an operation as a medical man could wish to perform. Bless my soul, if I had known—"

"Never mind, doctor, we won't hang you," said Spedden, with a laugh, in which all the troopers joined. "Give us a tankard all round, and we'll be silent at head-quarters."

"That I will—that I will! Come, Master Adam Lee, at my expense, vivate these warriors! Let them have a foaming pot o' your best brew, all about; and as for the gentleman, a glass of malmsey wine would refresh him."

The troopers having drank to the bottom of their tankards, bade Adam "a good day"; and cautioning mine host to look after his fair daughter while handsome English spies were about, rode off with their prisoner.

CHAPTER IV.

Perhaps the reader is desirous of knowing if we have called our story by its present title alone, because of the heroine's soubriquet, "The Golden Feather." All in good time, both fair and manly readers. We story-tellers, like builders, have first to lay our foundation; and as a good part of every well-built house is hidden beneath the ground; so the form and character of our tale does not first make itself apparent. There are a good many chapters yet to come wherein the Golden Feather will play her proper part, and yet not rob Rose of any of her honors.

We now proceed to bring up the remainder of the events which went before the opening chapter of our story, some of which have been given to the reader in detail.

We have said that Rosalie had beheld the capture of the young English officer, in whom she had taken so strange an interest—an interest which she felt was not love, yet to which she could give no other name! It was a sort of calm, sweet pleasure in thinking of him—a wish that Robert, her rude brother, were like him.

"Oh!" she thought, "if Robert were such a brother as he would be to me, were he my brother, how I could then lean upon him and love him. But my love for Robert is a fear—a nameless dread! While he kisses me, in his wild affection, I shrink with an instinct of fear, and almost dislike. I try to overcome it! I feel it is wrong; that he is my brother; and that this is the way he has of manifesting his affection for me! But, what tenderness there is in the tones and looks of this stranger. And will he die? Will he be executed? Oh, no, no—he must not perish!"

Such was the train of feelings which agitated her, as she shut herself up in her room, after she had spoken to the troopers so boldly and confessed she had admitted the spy into the inn. Tears filled her eyes at the brave young man's fate.

"What can be done—oh, what can be done?"

I would be willing to incur any risk to save him."

She kept her room all day, complaining of a headache. But as twilight came on, she walked forth, and crossing the bridge, she wandered along down a by-path to be alone, and to think undisturbed about what she should do to prevent the death of the youth. She seated herself upon a rock that overlooked the shining stream. A great branch over-shadowed her. After some time meditating in silence, she said:

"He must be saved!"

"What will you give me to save him?" said her brother Robert's voice, close behind her.

She looked, and saw him stepping forth from the covert of the tree.

"Oh, Robert, you did not save him to-day!" she said, with bitter reproach. "You betrayed him after leading him from the vault."

"Who said I did? I did what I promised you! You didn't expect me to go with him to his boat, where his men, for my pains, would have held me prisoner. No, no—I am up to that game!"

"The doctor said you pointed out the way he had taken. Oh! Robert, how could you do it?"

"The doctor shall have a wound in his own oily carcass he'll find all his medicines won't heal up, if he blabs in this way. Well, I did! Was I to betray my flag? I had done my part for you, and I owed it to my country to tell the dragoons where to find him!"

"It was very unkind of you."

"I can't see why you take so much interest in an enemy. I suppose it is because he is young and handsome, and has a small white hand, and a voice like a singing-woman with a bad cold—confound his picture! One word—Do you love him?" he asked, almost savagely.

"No! How could I love a person I never saw till twenty-four hours ago?"

"I don't know about that. Women are queer craft! They run before every wind, and don't know what it is to brace up and lay their course the same with any wind! There is no depending on what manoeuvre they may make next!"

"I am sorry you are angry with me, Robert."

"Angry! not with you, Rose!" he said, with sudden tenderness. And taking her hand, which, as he held it, slightly trembled in his. "I cannot be angry with one I love, as I love you, Rose. But I am jealous of every eye that gazes on you! I am envious of every favor you do another! If I knew you loved any one but me, I should hate him." The little hand trembled still more, and she gently strove to withdraw it. "I have heard a rumor since I came from sea; but I won't now speak of it."

She did not ask him what the rumor was; but her downcast looks, and a blush that mantled her cheeks, told that she knew, or at least could guess, what he meant. Can the reader? No! We have not let our readers yet into all the secrets of our heroine's little heart.

Perceiving she did not reply, he went on in a sort of menacing tone, though in a very low one:

"Rose, I love you as brother never loved a sister. I—"

"Love me only as brothers love sisters. Have confidence in me, and do not act as if I were a maiden you were in love with; for to tell you truly, Robert, your excessive affection is disagreeable to me. I cannot respond to it. It did not use to be so oppressive to me!"

"Because," he answered, with marked significance, "I did not know once what I know now!"

"And what do you know now?" she cried, turning full upon him; for she could not but be impressed by his extraordinary manner and words.

"Well—nothing," he answered, with a careless smile; "nothing that I care to tell now!"

She regarded his face (for it was bright enough twilight to see it plainly) for a moment with a perplexed and troubled look, and then cast her eyes, with a heavy sigh, toward the flowing river.

"You sighed, then, for that spy!" he said, sharply.

"No, I was not thinking of him."

"What did you sigh for?" he demanded, savagely.

"Because you are unkind—because you persecute me, and are so changed toward me. Once you loved me!"

"Once!" he repeated with a grim smile of inexplicable meaning. "No, not as I love you now! The love I bear for you now, Rose, is as far above that you speak of, as the sun is above the faint star which you see trembling in the east! I love you now with a passion as unbounded as my own existence, as—"

"Robert, release my hands! You are in your cups, or else mad!"

"Mad, yes! Insane with love for you. For you, Rose, I would willingly become a slave; wear iron chains on my hands and feet—but they would not be so heavy as the chains which chain my heart to you! Nay, do not fly! I am not in my cups. May not a brother love, without this wild look of terror in your eyes!"

"It is not a brother's love, Robert. I must go home!"

"You despise me," he said, covering his face with his hands. How is it that the more I try to secure your heart wholly to myself, I only estrange it?"

"You ought not then to try! Brothers and sisters love each other naturally, and not for effect or by effort. Be content with my love as it is, and you will see that I love you, Robert."

"It is, I confess, jealousy of great love in me! When my father folds you in his arms, I could tear you from them! When I see you smile on a young fellow, I could plunge my dagger into his heart! I worship your beauty—I do homage to your wonderful loveliness! I would have you all to myself as mine! If I had a brother, and he should love you, I could rend him in pieces! Such, Rose, is my love for you! I could lock you up in a gorgeous chamber all your life, and allow no one to see or speak to you!"

"Brother, I fear me your reason is failing since you got that dreadful wound in your head in the sea-fight."

"No, no, Rose! I am not mad! One day—"

Here he checked himself.

"Well, what 'one day,' brother?" she asked, earnestly.

"One day you will, perhaps, know I am not mad, but sane! But change the subject! You would be sorry if this spy is hanged!"

"It would deeply grieve me!"

"I thought so!"

"Not that I love him, but—"

"I comprehend! You are only interested in a handsome young fellow, because he is a foreigner. All girls like foreigners!"

"I do confess a singular and unaccountable interest in him. It seems to me as if we had met in a dream!"

"I dare say! But, as I have little to fear from him, I am willing to make an effort to get him away—"

"Oh, Robert, how good you are!"

"Not quite so good when I explain. There is a condition!"

"Name it!"

"Will you perform it?"

"If in my power!"

"This, then, is the condition. If you will here, by this river-side, and beneath the stars, swear to me by your hopes of heaven and fear of hell—"

"Stop, Robert! Oh, do not use such fearful language!"

"By your hopes of heaven and fear of hell, never again to suffer a person to kiss you save myself; never suffer one to hold your hand, save me, never walk arm-in-arm with another, save me; never receive a gift but from me; and never to marry but with my free consent, I will release your man, and see him safe to his ship beyond all danger!"

"Robert, I could smile at the oath, were it not mingled with so fearful an adjuration! But I see that you are in earnest! I cannot take it! I must let my father kiss me!"

"Well, yes! For the present, yes!" he answered gloomily. Will you take the rest of the oath.

"Will you release the spy?"

"I swear to you, or die in the attempt!"

"What is it in you, Robert, that you are willing to risk your life to keep me from being kissed, or marrying without your consent?"

"Call it madness! But there is method in

it. It is my humor, perhaps. Are not mad folk full of humors! I am told so. Just look upon it as a mere notion of mine. Take the oath, and I will, in three weeks' time or sooner, show you this spy a free man!"

"As I am not desirous of being kissed by young fellows, nor have any intention of marrying, just now, Robert, and as the life of a fellow-being depends on my consent to the conditions you name, I consent to them all with pleasure."

"Swear it," he cried, with gleaming glances of delight in his eyes.

"I dare not."

"Swear it by heaven above and earth beneath, and your hopes of heaven," he said, solemnly and fiercely.

"I swear it, then," she cried, with an agitated voice.

"Kneel and lift your two hands to heaven."

He forced her upon her knees, and raised her hands, and compelled her to repeat the oath with him, word for word! He then raised her, pressed a glittering cross to her lips, forcing her to kiss it, and then pressed a kiss upon her mouth, and said:

"Noble girl, I see now what a sacrifice you are willing to make for me, if you will do so much for a stranger. One of these days I may call upon you for a sacrifice for me!"

"Robert, leave me. You have made me blasphemous with that cross. You have alarmed and disturbed me altogether. Let me remain here to gather composure. As I have sworn to you the oath you repeated, I shall expect you to try and save him from the death. If you do not, I shall never love you again; for this night's scene has deeply moved me to fear and dread you. But if you rescue him, I will forget all and forgive all!"

"Speak to no soul of my purpose, Rose. I shall go to work at once to plan an escape for him," answered the strange young man.

"Come, will you go to the house with me?"

"Not now. I wish to be alone."

"Very well, as Ralph Berry is said to have been killed at the battle of Lake Erie, I have no fear to leave you alone."

This was spoken with the most cutting and wicked irony. Rosalie uttered a suppressed shriek, as if she would not betray the feelings which his sudden intelligence produced; but unable to control herself, she sank upon the ground.

"Dead! Ralph Berry killed! Oh, my heart! my poor heart! It will break! Would that I had died with him!"

She seemed to forget the presence of Robert, her whole soul stricken by the news he had spoken. He stood by her and laughed mockingly.

"So I knew it! So I could have sworn you loved him! I heard it when I came home, that of all the young fellows, Ralph Berry was your favorite! No, he is not dead! I but said so to try you! I am satisfied now that you love him. But beware, who loves you, or whom you love, dies by Robert Lee's hand!"

She arose, and sprang toward him, and grasping him by both wrists, she cried:

"Oh! evil, cruel, dreadful man! I know you wish me to die! You take the very course to kill me! You seem to hate me instead of loving me! Tell me, do you now speak truth, when you revoke your words, and say he is not dead?"

"I did but jest, Rose! I heard he was slightly wounded, and if it will please you, that he was promoted for his bravery!"

"How can I believe you? Leave me, Robert, you are inexplicable to me! You say you love me, but you take the very course to—"

"Make me hate you! Very well. We must not hate. Let us not quarrel. I will go and see what I can do for your spy. But if I rescue him, I shall claim your fulfillment of your sacred oath!"

"It shall be kept," she faintly answered him, turning her face away from him.

He regarded her a moment in silence, and then muttering, "I must be careful, as she says, that I do not make her hate me, or all will be lost," he went toward the inn.

The next day he was not at the inn, nor the three following. True to his word, he was in the city ascertaining where the spy was in prison, and planning the best mode of effecting his rescue.

By means of bribes with money which Rose furnished him, he got access to the prison, and informed him of his intentions; and obtained

from him gold to enable him to act in his behalf. The next week, Arthur Percy was brought before a military court, and tried, and condemned to be hanged the following Friday. There remained therefore but nine days for Robert Lee to act; but he so skillfully managed matters; that the very night before the execution was to have taken place, the prisoner's door was opened, his chains removed, and he was led forth into the open yard by three men in masks, led by a fourth, who was Robert Lee. These men were keepers and guards largely bribed with money enough to enable them that night to leave New York in a shallop for Nova Scotia, with a note from Percy to the admiral of the station, that they had assisted in his escape, and therefore fled the country. The escape was so admirably conducted by the ingenuity and talent of Robert Lee, that before midnight he was safely concealed in a cave at Hoboken with his fugitive. There leaving him, he made his way up to Spuyten Duyvel Creek, and informed Rosalie of his success, and asked what he should do with him. She bade him bring him, as soon as he could do so, safely, to the bridge, when she would aid him in getting to his frigate.

But so keen was the search, that it was some time before Robert Lee could safely withdraw his fugitive from his shelter, where he provided him with provisions. At length, as we have seen, having disguised him completely, he proceeded with him openly up the river by day-light, and just after dark reached the bridge, where our story opened with Rosalie waiting for his arrival. We have seen how joyfully she received him, and how, at her request, her brother conducted him to a secret cavern in the banks of the stream where once the famous pirate "Bird" secreted himself and his boat's crew for thirty days, from the pursuit of a cruiser's party.

Our story now will flow on in the natural order of events, inasmuch as we have let the reader see enough intimating the circumstances which transpired before we opened chapter first, to enable him to proceed with the story without confusion or obscurity.

Leaving the rescued spy safely sheltered in the pirate's cave, which could only be accessible from the water, or by swinging down to its opening from a branch projecting over its concealed mouth, we will here give the reader a brief passage of history.

The battle of Lake Erie had just been fought under the gallant Perry, and the whole band was ringing with praises of the naval hero. Every city offered him a public reception, and the poets of the Union were everywhere singing his praise. The city of New York, not behind others, had invited him to become its guest; and on the third day after the spy was to have been executed, Perry was to have made his public entry into the city. Partly in order to receive him, troops had been assembled in the city. The papers, in printing everything about the battle to present the hero fresh with his laurels to the minds of the public, contained the following paragraph:

"While the gallant hero of Lake Erie was engaged at close quarters, Lieutenant Ralph Berry Turner, a fine, bold, young sailor, who, we are proud to say, is a native of Harlem, and who commanded the Caledonia gun-boat of three guns, endeavored to get into action. His foresail interfered between him and the enemy; but rather than take an inch of canvas in, he ordered his men to fire through it. He fought his little vessel so gallantly, that Perry, taking an epaulette from his own shoulder, fastened it upon his, thus rewarding appropriately the cool intrepidity and consummate skill of the brave young sailor. It is but a year since young Turner entered the service as a volunteer. He got his rank as a lieutenant by cutting out a British gun-brig in the night under a murderous fire from the brig and battery, with a loss of but two killed and three wounded out of seventeen brave fellows whom he led to the attack. When in the late action, his gun-boat was disabled, he succeeded in boarding the Ariel of four guns, and seeing all her men shot away from one of the guns as he reached the deck, he stepped into their places and fought the vessel till the splendid victory was won! We hope to see the young officer promoted to a deck worthy of his gallantry."

This paper was received at the inn, while Rosalie was awaiting the arrival of the escaped spy at the bridge stairs. When she had sent him by her brother to the cave to wait for an opportunity to get off, she returned, as we have seen, to the house.

"Ho, girl! Stop here, light of the diamond," called her father to her out of the tap-room, soon after she came in. "Our village is in honor! Hear about young Berry Turner?"

The sound of this name made Rosalie's heart bound, and then stand suddenly as still as death. What was she about to hear? She dared not ask, but waited tremblingly. He read aloud the whole of the above paragraph. When he had ended, he looked round to get her approval, with a "what think of that, Rose?" when she was no longer to be seen! Blind with tears, her heart overflowing, she had hastened to her room to give vent to her weeping joy.

CHAPTER V.

When at length Rose had subdued the deep joy of her heart, so far as to appear with dry eyes before her father, who called to her while she was in the room, to say he had news for her.

"What is it, dear father? Do you call me?"

"Ay, golden! ay, my bonnie bright eyes! more news! The spy that was to have been hanged in the city to-day, has escaped!"

"The whole country side is up, and men have been seeking him all day," said a man who stood in the door. "He was got off last night!"

"Pray Heaven he come this way," cried Adam Lee, "and I lay my hands on him. By the bones of my grand-mother! I will show the government I am not the man to harbor spies!"

"Is there any reward offered?" asked Robert Lee, who had come in unperceived, after having placed Arthur Percy in safety in the cavern by the water-side.

"A thousand dollars, good money!" answered the man.

"That'll bring him, if he's to be found in the land," answered Robert Lee, with emphasis, and careful not to direct his eyes toward his sister.

"Yes, half of it would make a good pile," said Adam Lee, "for a poor devil! What are you, sir? Ain't you a police?"

"Yes; I am come down here to look about; as I heard he was captured about here!"

"So he was, and a smart fight he made of it. Let me tell you, as a friend, that, though he's got one arm broke, he isn't to be taken by one or two, nor yet three men, unless they are well armed and have their wits well about them! He's a true man-o'-war officer, and fighting is sugar-plums to him—be sure o' that! Rose, I called you to tell you that, if you see anything of this fellow lurking about, you give warning; for he got such good quarters here before, he may, like a horse, come again to the same stall." Here a great noise of oaths, and songs, and rapping came from the room where the privateer-men were drinking. "By my bones, but I must not have such a disorderly house!" cried Adam.

"Yes, father, if he comes to the house, I will let you know!" said Rose, quietly, as her father rose to see to his noisy guests.

Robert Lee laughed aloud.

"What is it, boy? What is it, lad?" asked his father, turning back. "Dost laugh at my waddle?"

"Laughing at my thoughts, old man!" answered his son, lounging from the room.

Rose did not like her brother's manner. She felt that the spy was wholly in his power, and that he might betray him for the reward. She mistrusted his devotion to her, weighed against such a sum of money. She trembled for the captive's safety. She thought, also, she had seen her brother, as he went out, to give a significant look to the policeman. She was confirmed in this, in seeing him in a moment turn to go out by the door through which Robert Lee went, which led into a side-yard. Her resolution was at once taken. Stepping up to the man, she touched him on the arm, and said, with a smile:

"Sir, you have come far! won't you let me fill you a tankard of my father's best ale! The night is chilly, and if you are going in pursuit of the spy, you may be out all night!"

The man, who had before regarded her beautiful face with silent admiration, turned, and, lifting his hat (for beauty always commands politeness in the rudest men), answered:

"It is, as you say, pretty mistress, rather cool abroad. I will take the ale, and pay for it, too, for that matter!"

"Oh, by no means! Wait a moment!"

Adam had just left the room to stop the noise in the next apartment; and going into the next room, she came out shortly with a silver mug, which she soon filled with amber-colored ale, the sight and fragrance of which made the eyes of the policeman sparkle, like the beads that mounted to the rim.

"Here's to your health, fair mistress! May you marry the man o' your choice!"

"Thank you, sir!"

"Oh, such ale as this is fit for a king!"

"Take another mug, sir!"

"Well, I don't mind if I do! Ah, this will keep a man wide awake." Rose almost imperceptibly smiled.

"You had best take another, sir! I ask you nothing for it; and as she stooped to draw it, she dropped from a vial she had brought with her (and which she purposely went out for) from the inner room, containing a sleeping potion, which her father, who was wise in all the ways of inn-keepers, used to drug noisy peoples' ale with, when they had made noise enough. By this potent liquid, he had all his tipsy and uproarious guests in the bonds of sleep whenever he saw fit; and many a night were the old greasy oaken benches in the tap and under the stoop, turned into lodging-places for his company of sleepers!

"Sit, sir, and drink the last at your leisure," said Rose, pointing to a settle toward which the man reeled. She then went out after her brother, whom she found just coming back into the tap-room to see why the policeman, to whom he had actually given a signal, did not follow, supposing he had not understood his wink. The man had, however, understood it perfectly; for there are certain conventional signs that bad men interchange, which all other bad men comprehend intuitively.

"Is that fellow gone?" he asked of her.

"No; but I come out to ask you if you left him in the cavern safely?"

"It seems to me you can think of nothing but him! From that time, over by the stream there, when, two weeks ago, I made you swear to me, if I would effect his escape, you would not wed without my consent, up to this night, when I have brought him to you safely, at great risk and cost, I would swear he has not been out of your thoughts, night or day! If I had my will, I would shoot the fellow as I would a hound! But I was bound to you to see him safe!"

"Is he safe in the cavern?"

"Yes. At least he was half an hour ago! I won't answer for him since! Don't you hear that there is a general chase after him! His escape has made more noise than Perry's coming will make to-morrow, or whenever it is! Rewards are offered for the keepers, and for the 'man in the mask' who got him away! That is me! So you see what I have risked for love of you, Rose!"

"I know it. I hope you will never be suspected."

"If I should be taken and sent to prison, do you think you would try as hard to get me out as you have to effect the escape of the officer-spy?"

This was said with mingled tenderness and reproach—for with all his roughness, he seemed really and fondly to love her, and to be humanized by her presence.

"I would not hesitate to do all in my power. But do not speak of it. How shall we dispose of him?"

"If I had my way, Rose, I would give him up to the first officer of the police who comes along. Nay, don't start so away from me! A thousand dollars is a great deal; but I would rather have your smiles than gold, Rose."

She was silent. A certainty that her brother could not be trusted sunk into her heart.

"Rose, trust me."

"I will try to do so."

"What do you command?"

"To saddle my horse with your own, and lead him out by the cross-road, and fasten him there in an hour from now; and I will then go to his place of concealment, and lead him to the road where you are. You will ride with him to New Rochelle, and so on, until he can come to a point opposite which, he says, his frigate is lying. He could arrive by the shore before dawn. He must be disguised as a citizen, and I have no doubt he will get off safely. You will then return with the horses, and can be here before noon, and no one need suspect your errand."

"Capitally planned, Rose! You would make a good general, or a good conspirator, I don't know which. How nice! I like all but your going down to the cavern by night, where he is. I love you too well to have you and this handsome fellow have a *tête-à-tête* coming through the woodland path together by star-light. No, no! That would be giving this spy too much pleasure. I have no love for him. But as I see your heart is upon it, I will see him off; but I will go to the cavern myself for him. You stay at home, and go to bed, and dream of love and happiness. Trust me, Rose."

"I will!" she answered, fervently, hoping her confidence would inspire in him fidelity.

"That is enough. In two hours we will be on the road. But I must first go into the tap, where I left my stick."

Rose, instead of entering the house, walked on until she found herself pacing the garden-walk, by the river side, in deep thought. She was reviewing all her brother's duplex conduct and strange character, and the more she reflected upon the subject, the stronger grew her suspicions that he could not be trusted.

"No, no! He who could once betray him, will again! What shall I do? The policeman cannot aid him. Oh, I hope he will be true! But Robert is avaricious, and the reward is large. Can I trust him? What is it that binds him to his promise with me? What is a sister's love in such a person's esteem? Is it worth a thousand dollars? Will he not risk my displeasure, as he has done before, trusting to my forgiveness. But if he betrays me now, by proving treacherous to this young officer, I will never forgive him while I live. I shall ever behold upon his hands the blood of his victim. Why am I so interested in this stranger spy? I know not what inexplicable feeling moves me to think of him so kindly. I know not what mysterious power impels me to make such sacrifices to secure his safety. I do not love him. It is not such love as I feel toward Robert—nor such tender and proved affection as I feel toward the brave, good, noble Ralph Turner! Oh, how I love Ralph, and how the news of his brave deeds in battle have made my heart bound with delight. I fear me, he will quite forget me in all his glory. I hear the town's-folk are to give him a reception, and all the village girls are to strew flowers in his path, when he enters the village on his way to his mother's. They say he will be a captain, and then he will scarcely look at the inn-keeper's daughter."

"Wont I, Rose?" cried a warm, manly voice close by her side, and a pair of manly arms folded her close to the gallant heart of the second hero of Lake Erie.

"O Ralph, Ralph! is it you?" she exclaimed, covering her face with her hands, while her head dropped upon his shoulder, in all confiding love.

"Yes, dear Rosalie; and overjoyed to find, from your words which I heard, that you love me still."

"Oh, forever, Ralph! I am now so happy."

"And so you could doubt me, my dearest, as if glory and love for thee could not go hand in hand. If I thought rising in rank could change my heart, and make me love thee less, I would rather fall back to my former station. How lovely you have grown!" he exclaimed, as he turned her face to the moonlight, after removing, with a slight resistance, the fair hands that covered it to hide both the blushes and tears of her deep joy. Was it not, also, to prevent him from kissing her lips? recalling her oath.

"But you look pale, Ralph. I heard you were wounded."

"It was nothing. I am almost myself again. And now I have seen you, Rosalie, and know your heart is unchanged (oh, how the sweet confession I overheard made my heart bound!), I shall soon be well."

"I will try and make you so, dear Ralph! Oh, how bravely you fought! I trembled as I heard the accounts of your bravery and dangers."

"Who would not fight bravely, Rosalie, for his country and you! Your image cheered me on in the hottest of the fight. This for Rosalie—that for Rosalie! I fought for glory and for you, feeling you would be a sharer in all my honors."

He again pressed her to his heart, and would have saluted her, but she shrunk from

his kiss, and even from his folded arm—for all at once she felt the full force of her oath overshadowing her soul.

"What, Rosalie, have I displeased you?" he asked, with all a lover's quickness and sensibility.

"Oh, no, no! But don't kiss me. Don't hold my hand. I love you with all my heart, but you must not be angry if I seem cold! It is only seeming."

He saw that she spoke as if distressed. He said:

"I fear you are become ill. The night air is too chilly. I won't kiss you, although we are betrothed, dearest, if it is disagreeable to you."

This was said sadly.

"Oh, no, no! It is not disagree—I mean—I—I—O Ralph, Ralph! you don't know all!" And she burst into tears.

He stood surprised by her side. His face wore an expression of sympathy and inquiry. Through the branches, the moon fell like full lamp-light upon his face—for he had removed his naval cap.

He was about a head taller than the maiden (herself of graceful medium height), with a handsome dark countenance; high, open forehead, beneath which beamed a clear, brown-looking hazel eye, lighted up with feeling, and sparkling with intelligence. The expression of his mouth, though resolved, was yet quiet and pleasing; and his whole face was one of those which at once invite the confidence of all who, for the first time, look upon it. A man would say: In danger, that young fellow is to be depended on. A woman would say: That young man is to be trusted, where helplessness seeks his aid. A child would love him at sight; and the beggar would be sure, at a glance, of relief from his hand! He was the very person for such a girl as Rosalie Lee to love with all her being! and this love, which had grown up with them from childhood, he reciprocated with all his heart.

"Rosalie, my sweet love," he said, "I will not pry into your secret."

"I know you are too generous. By-and-by I can tell it to you, I hope."

"I will love you the same, and let you keep it as long as you will."

"Oh, how good you are!"

"Let us change the subject. When did you see my dear mother?"

"Three days ago. I was there."

"Yes, just like you. She wrote me you often came to see her."

"It was next to seeing you, Ralph; besides, she got all the news from you."

Ralph smiled happily, and was about to express his gratification by taking her hand—the most natural thing in the world—when recollecting before she did the ban upon this, he withdrew his hand, and said, smilingly, with good-humor:

"Ah, I like to have forgotten."

"And did you come to see me first?"

"Yes. I arrived in a vessel down the Hudson this evening; and when off the mouth of the inlet, I was put ashore, and so came along on foot—for you know it is a familiar path to my feet, Rosalie. I could not pass without coming to see you; and was making my way up through the garden, when I saw you in the walk. I recognized your sweet figure at a glance; and, coming softly on to surprise you, I overheard your kind words—that rewarded me for all I had done in battle. Ah, Rosalie! the lightest word of one we love repays a thousand hostile roars of cannon."

"And heard you no more? Did you not hear what I was saying to myself, before that I spoke about you?" she asked, earnestly.

"Yes, Rosalie! I heard some words."

"Oh, what? Do not conceal!"

"I heard you say something of the 'blood of a victim; and of one you did not love as you did me!'"

"Oh, I do not love him at all, Ralph! But I can trust you. Come with me to the bower where we used to sit—I will tell you all: for you must aid me."

"I will do all I can for you, only tell me how, and what."

In a few moments they had reached a remote alcove of the garden. Here Rose proceeded to relate, in the frankest and fullest manner, without the least reserve, the story of the spy; and telling where he now was, ending with the plain declaration of her fears that Robert would betray him yet.

"Has he given only his promise to thee,

Rosalie?" asked Ralph, when he had heard all.

"No more! I have only the security of his love!"

"Was there no pledge on thy part? What did you promise him?"

Rosalie dropped her head. But she felt as if Providence had given her this moment an opportunity for explanation, and she said:

"My brother is greatly attached to me, Ralph, as you know! His love has a strange jealousy in it, as if I were not a sister, but rather one to whom he was betrothed! He is so jealous of me that he can't bear the idea of my smiling on any young man. So he made me take a dreadful oath, that if he helped this spy escape from death, I would not permit any one to kiss me, press my hand, nor show me any attention, and that I would not marry any one but by his permission!"

Ralph fairly started, and exclaimed:

"And did you take the oath?"

"I could not help it, Ralph."

"And soon expecting me home; and knowing we were betrothed!"

"Yet I hoped that Heaven would some way interpose to release me from it, since I took it in so good a cause."

"Well, Rosalie, I won't quarrel with you. I am greatly relieved by your explanation. I shall be the sufferer; but it will be hard for me to keep the oath, too; for you see you bound me to it, without knowing it."

"I did not think so, then. But it won't last long, dear Ralph; my brother has got to be told we are to be married, and will give his consent—and then—"

"But if he shouldn't! I remember Robert well before he went to sea—we were never great friends as boys! I have not seen him for five years. I fear he will hardly consent, if he is as jealous of you as you say."

"I think I can prevail with him to do any thing, Ralph. But I wish you to keep away from the inn for a few days—I do not wish to anger him. Now I wish you to try and prevent Robert from betraying the spy."

"I will do all I can, because you ask it, dear Rosalie. What can I do?"

"Hasten to the cavern; your brother has a skiff at the landing. Row to the cave and take him in, and get him off before Robert can go there; for I know Robert does not mean him well."

"Depend upon me, Rosalie. Where shall I take him?"

"I know it is a great deal to ask of you; but there are four British vessels off New Rochelle. If you could get round into the Sound, you might be able to reach one of them."

"I see what is required of me, Rosalie, I will go at once. I may be gone three days. I will not return until your errand is faithfully executed."

He soon left her, and after making a *détour* about the inn, came to the river below, and stopped at a large antiquated farm-house, which projected almost over the water. We will not linger to describe his meeting with his mother, which was one of joy and pride, mutually shared. He remained with her but a quarter of an hour, and then taking with him a hired man, who sometimes fished for the family, he started in the boat down the stream for the cavern: coming in front of it, he pulled in, and called in a low voice, "Arthur Percy," which was the name Rosalie had given him.

The occupant, who was watching, seeing only two persons, came boldly out to the mouth of the cavern, and said:

"Who calls?"

"A friend of Golden Feather! I have come to row you, sir, to your fleet."

"Thanks!" answered Arthur; and the next moment he was in the boat, which shot out into the moonlit stream.

Not a word was spoken more by Ralph. He felt that he was acting contrary to his conscience as an American officer, but loyalty to his lady-love. They rowed down Harlem river for seven miles, until they saw Randal's Island ahead. They then turned to the left. Here a fair wind overtook them, and hoisting his lateen-sail, the little skiff went dancing along toward Long Island Sound like a Feather.

As they flitted along, parallel with the coast, the young officer could not remain silent, but warmly expressed his deep obligations to his deliverer. Thus a conversation grew up between them; and by the time the sun rose,

the two young men were on the most friendly terms. At length they came in sight of the four British ships. Unlike Robert Lee, when it was proposed to him to take the spy back, the fearless Ralph had no apprehensions of being detained. It was ten o'clock in the morning when he arrived along side of a noble-looking frigate, of forty-four guns. The young officer was received as one alive from the dead by the commanding officer; and Ralph was not only handsomely entertained, but a purse of gold and jewels was forced upon him as a gift from him to Rosalie.

He would have refused it, but it was tossed into his boat after it left the side; and he felt he had no right to throw it overboard, as it was but a fair offering to the maiden for all she had done for him.

CHAPTER VI.

The suspicions of Rosalie were correct. No sooner had her brother Robert left her in the court of the inn, to go for the horses, than in his heart he resolved that the thousand dollars should be his, at least the greater portion of it.

First going to the stables, he saddled with men's saddles both horses, and led them to the cross-roads under a tree, where he tied them, secretly and unobserved, in the dark copse. Thus far he fulfilled his promise to Rose. He then hastened back to the inn—little suspecting that, when he reached it, Rose and Ralph Turner were conversing together in the distant avenues of the garden, by the sound of the whispering winds and the rippling waves of the stream.

The little doctor met him at the door. He was just coming out with a mug of beer in his hand, "to drink it," as he said to Robert, "in peace," away from the roaring songs of the privateersmen, who had been for several hours occupying one of the little parlors on the side of the tap-room.

"Privateers!" growled the doctor; "they act more like buccaneers; and were it not that they were rollicking under the roof of mine host, Adam, I would swear by my scalpel, that they are bloody pirates! Such oaths! Such talk of killing, and burning, pillaging, and blowing sky-high! Bless my soul; I shall be glad when their bellies get well filled, or the ale is well out. And such news, Master Robert!"

"What?"

"What? Bless me! Why the spy has escaped the hangman's noose. Got the word here this morning, but didn't believe it. But the New York officers are in hot chase. Three of 'em were here not half an hour ago; and lo! there be's one as drunk as ever Jack Spedden was! See him in there on the settee! That young fellow, with his broken arm, seems to be a match for everybody in creation—slippery as an eel!—catch him and can't hold him; a gentleman though, born aristocrat—see that easy enough. It would have made some poor lady's heart ache—his mother's, or his lady-love's—if his fair neck had been broken by the hangman's rope. I have taken a sort of liking for him—and why not? he was my patient. We doctors have a friendly fellow-feeling with our patients—and why not?"

Thus soliloquizing, he took a seat beneath the great tree which grew by the door, and began to quaff his ale. Robert Lee had already entered the inn, and after listening to the door where the men were making so much noise, he was about to knock, when his father came out and nearly run against him.

"What, odds, Bob! Is that you? Those fellows need drugging, and they shall have it in their next tankards! They don't mind a word I say!"

"I'll see what I can do, father. I know the captain."

"Eh, you do? Well, it is not the best of company, boy—I know him, too!"

"Then you know, old man, he is no privateersman!" said Robert, significantly.

"Ah, by my bones! Hast thou the knowledge, Bob? Come aside here. What dost thou know? Speak low!"

"I know that he is a pirate—the famous—"

"St—st—no names! Walls have ears. I see thou art in the secret. But keep thy tongue, man!"

"I have no wish to blab, father! I know more than you guess at."

"What is it?"

"That you used to go a buccaneering in your younger days, before you settled down and came to anchor here!"

"Who the devil told you this?"

"I found it out as I have found out other events of the past, old man! Now, as to these pirates, I recognized the captain as soon as he came into the inn with his six men who came down the creek from the Hudson with him! And what is more, I know where his craft rides at anchor close under the Palliades just above Fort Lee."

"Humph! I shall begin to think you are one of them yourself; and instead of having been, as you boast, fighting for your country, you have been buccaneering!"

"There are worse trades for getting gold," answered Robert Lee, with a cold smile.

His father stared at him closely, and with a troubled countenance. He then said:

"Is it so, boy? I am sorry, then! I had hoped my son at least would have been an honest man, in atonement for his old father's sins! So, then, thou art become a buccaneer!"

"I did not say so!"

"Manner is stronger than speech, boy. I am sad to hear this. So the fellows there are your comrades?"

"Not exactly. I am a lieutenant over all in that room, save one. He is my captain, and he is worthy to be a leader of men who dare to do anything their heart inclines them to do!"

Old Adam shook his head, and sighed.

"If I had known this, I would not have felt so easy; nor would I have let thee be so much in company with thy sister. She, at least, must be kept pure and good."

"Sister?" sneered the young man.

"What mean you?" cried the landlord, with a start.

"Oh, nothing! I merely said sister. What is there in that word? Is she not my sister, old man?"

"To be sure—yes, to be sure! Who denies it?"

"I have not."

"I ought to deny, now you are a buccaneer, to have her called so; for whatever I have been, I love her as my soul and life, and I will protect her from harm. Your society, boy, will contaminate her."

"You are becoming rarely virtuous in your old age, father," he answered, with an ironical laugh. "But I cannot loiter here. I have work to do."

Thus speaking, this young man tapped at the door of the room.

"Come in!" thundered a loud voice. And Robert, opening, beheld through clouds of tobacco smoke, seven men seated about a table which was covered with tankards. At the head sat the chief, a large, herculean, brigand-looking man, with a naturally ferocious visage made more so by a sabre-cut across his temples, eye, and cheek. He was at least forty-eight or fifty years of age, with gray hair thickly matted about his forehead and thick neck. He wore a blue jacket thickly decorated with bell-buttons; a broad belt about his waist containing a brace of pistols, and upon the table before him lay a sword with sharp, glittering edges. The men about him all wore a similar costume, and had some insignia of office-rank about them. Two of them were young men, with reckless, desperate looks; a third had eyes out of which never shone a ray of mercy; a fourth, a stout, middle-aged man, had the outlines of every human passion deeply cut into his bloated face; a fifth, a young Spaniard, looked as if bloodshed was his element; for the peculiar expression of the sanguinary wolf was visible in the murderous glitter of his eye; the sixth was a mere lad of fifteen, but on his beardless face the devil was reflected in not less certain shape than he appeared in the countenances of the rest.

Thus might have looked a group of devils in the flesh, reveling in the courts of hell. The features of all were flushed with their long carousal. No wonder Adam Lee at last resolved to drug their beer—albeit they threw down yellow, foreign gold, at every fresh draught, to pay five times the reckoning. It was his avarice which had kept him so long patient. Moreover, Adam stood some fear of the leader; for he had no sooner beheld him early in the evening enter with his men, and cry: "Ho, skipper! Here are a privateer's boat's crew want a supper and plenty of good ale," than he recognized in the speaker a for-

mer comrade in piracy—albeit he had not seen him for twenty or more years; but when he found he himself was not recognized, he felt greatly relieved. His suspicions that he was now more of a buccaneer than of a privateersman, were ere long confirmed by the dark tales of blood and rapine he overheard from the room after their wits were well out with the wine and ale they poured down.

When Robert Lee entered, the chief of the party rose, and said:

"Welcome, my lieutenant! Where hast thou been? By the mass! thy father brews good beer, and draws proper wines from his cellar! He swears we make too much noise. It is the fault o' his own liquors, I tell him."

"One would think you were the privateers you pretend to be, from the loose way you let yourselves out; for too much noise may lead to asking questions which may be troublesome to answer. There are plenty of policemen about, and I would not have trouble with them here!"

"Well spoken, Rob Lee. Thou art the only man of us who has his senses! What dost thou want? Hast come to say that you are all ready for us?"

"Not yet. But I want to see you, captain, outside here. Command these gentlemen to keep quiet; or, which would be better, to make for the barge and bay on their oars until we are ready for their aid. My father, lads, has a way of putting sleeping doses into the last cups of his noisy guests; and I would advise you to drink no more."

"We will cut the rogue into mince-meat!" cried one of the pirates, springing to his feet.

"We will hang him to his sign-post," cried others, in great fury.

"Silence, gentlemen!" cried the chief, grasping his sword. "By the head of John Baptist, I will make the man a head shorter who moves to do mischief here. We came to this inn on the invitation of my lieutenant here. His father keeps it, and his father shall not be harmed. He has not drugged us yet, and so what is the fuss about? We have made too much noise, I dare say, but it is long we have been on shore and tasted such good cheer! Get sober, my friends. We have got work to do yet before we go abroad, if I mistake not. How is it, Lieutenant Lee?"

"It is not yet certain which is to be done. If these officers will return to the boat and await us, they will best serve the object which brought them here."

"Go, gentlemen," said the chief.

The officers now removed their caps and arms, being accoutred and attired after the fashion of privateersmen of the day, and Adam Lee soon had the satisfaction of seeing them come forth and make their way across the bridge, not, however, without some singing and cursing, as they reeled, all clinging together, in irregular platoons on their way. When they got to the north side of the bridge, they found a path leading down to the water, and underneath the dark arch at the end of the bridge, they found the barge which they had concealed there, when they arrived just before sunset from the Hudson, and only about an hour before the twilight came on, when Rosalie left them carousing in the inn to go down to the bridge-stairs at the end next to "the Red Oak" landing, to receive her brother and the spy, as recorded in Chapter I.

There were four human forms lying asleep in the boat, which, when roused by the tipsy buccaneers, proved to be huge Africans who had rowed the boat into the creek from the buccaneer vessel which lay close under the cliffs of the Palisades, nearly five miles off.

When Robert Lee saw these buccaneers depart for their boat, he took the chief aside, and said to him:

"Come with me. I wish to tell you a secret by which, in the jibbing of a ship, you can get five hundred dollars, and do the country service."

"As to the money, I am willing to have it; but as to doing the country service, I shall hardly do that until I am hanged," he said, with a laugh.

Walking together, under the trees, by the side of the inn, the two men came to an obscure spot, where Robert Lee related to him, briefly, the position of the spy.

"Good! But instead of the horses, let us go with my barge for him," said the pirate.

"Well, I promised Rose that I would get

him away on horseback. My plan was, as he did not know the country, to lead him about so as to get him on the York road, and so deliver him up to the authorities at Manhattanville."

"That won't do. He might get away from you. I will row down with my boat and take him, and then I can to-morrow send him to the city, and get the reward. You can take him, and receive the money!"

"Yes. This will be best! I will get him out of the cove, and trust him to your boat."

"But where is the young woman you said we should have to bring off?"

"Well, not to-night. I did think of stealing one away; but the young fellow who I supposed was in my way, has not yet arrived."

"Her lover?"

"Yes."

"Do I guess right in saying that the young girl is loved by you?"

"She is my sister!"

"That indeed? I caught a glimpse of her in the inn. She is a Venus of the sea! And why do you wish to take her off to sea with you?"

"To keep her from marrying against my consent."

"It is very odd."

"That is my affair," answered Robert Lee, sharply. "I am to command the Scorpion after to-morrow, according to our compact."

"That will depend whether you fulfill your whole part toward me. You promised me that I should have my weight in silver plate, if I gave up the Scorpion to you!"

"I have not denied this."

"No, but when I came in my boat for the silver, you talk only about taking your sister on board."

"And did I not say that, if I wished to bring a young woman on board when you took the silver, I should have the right?"

"That was half the bargain! But here I've been here half the night, and see neither the money nor the maiden. All the money you offer me is half of the reward for taking a spy."

"Well, captain, do not you to take the trouble to get angry. The girl bothers me. I don't know what to do about her. I haven't made up my mind how to act! I have got to wait and see which way the wind blows!"

"Well, I cannot wait the changes of the wind where a woman is concerned. If we are not to take her off, as it would seem, I would like to see the plate! You well know our schooner is sought after, and that it isn't safe for her to lay twenty-four hours longer in the Hudson. She will attract attention. If you are not going to buy my captaincy in her, why, say so, and let me be off. I have no desire to hang at my own yard arm! I sell out to you because I am getting old, and am tired of piracy; and with the plate you are to pay me, I want to find some quiet nook, and cast anchor for life, and become an honest citizen, like your father here! Do you know that I believe he recognized me?"

"He did."

"I dare swear! Well, if he will let me alone I will let him alone, and let 'by-gones be by-gones!' But he may inform on me for his own protection against me; and so I wish to be off, since he knows who I am!"

"But first let me go down with you in the barge to the cave, and get my man."

"I care more about my plate!"

"Come, then, with me."

Robert Lee then led the pirate captain into the inn by a side-door, which led from a low Dutch stoop. It opened into a small, square entry.

"Stay here two minutes, in the dark, captain, until I get my dark-lantern and see where the old man is."

"Never mind where the old man is."

"He might be troublesome, if he should suspect anything."

The chief, left in the dark, drew his cutlass and stood on the alert, moving the point about him, constantly, in a circle, lest he should be approached by stealth, by some one lurking about him; for men of blood are ever suspicious of all men and places. Robert Lee advanced along a narrow entry, until he came to the tap-room. He found his father closing up the shutters, for it was now full midnight.

"Ah, boy! You up, and here?"

"Yes, father."

"On some mischief, I'll be bound! Go to bed."

"I'm looking for a light. Here's a dark-lantern. Good-night, old man."

"Ay, good-night. Don't make a noise to wake your sister. She's in bed. She came to say, good-night, and told me she was not overly well."

"Are you going to bed, father?"

"That I am. Your infernal pirates have kept me in a fever. They shall never darken my doors again. If they do, I will have a gang o' perlice down upon them!"

"And me too, I dare say!"

"Yes, you, too, man, if you don't behave yourself. What set you to pirating?"

"Paternal example, father."

"But I have repented, years ago."

"Well, when I get a chest o' silver, I'll repent, may be, too, and settle down an honest Boniface."

"What do you mean, you rascal?"

"What I said."

"Do you suspect anything?" called the old man, approaching him, and looking him in the face, as pale as death.

"Don't need to suspect when I know," answered he, as he left the room.

"Can he know? Can he have found out? Has he discovered my treasure? No, no! he can't have done it! The chief has told him; for now I recollect, he was one of my very crew that captured the English ship. He has told him how I got a chest of silver. Ah! if I had only reflected while that pirate was drinking, I would have put arsenic in his tankard! But it was so many years ago, I could not fix the vessel he was on; only I recollected he had been with me. He has told Rob, yet he nor no one else knows that I have got it all, now. They wouldn't believe I have not touched it; but am keeping it for conscience' sake! O Lor'! oh, dear me! If Rob should have discovered it! I'll go and see, before I sleep! As soon as the house is all still, and everybody, and Rob, too, is in bed, I will open the trunk, and go and see if it is all there, and if any signs of anybody's having ever been there is to be found! I tremble with very fear!"

He then carefully closed all the inner doors of the inn, raked up the embers, for it was a cool night, and then sought his bed-room, resolved ere long to visit the place where his treasure was hidden.

CHAPTER VII.

When Robert Lee returned to the pirate chief, with one slide of his lantern raised, he said to him:

"We must wait a while. The old man is wide awake and restless. We will take a half an hour to go with the barge down to the cave."

"Very well, it will do no harm to secure the spy and the thousand," answered the pirate.

The two men then proceeded noiselessly across the bridge, and descending to the barge, roused the people in it from their stupor, and floated down the creek until Robert Lee pointed out the direction of the cave on the opposite shore. They pulled in and came to the bank just below it. The young betrayer then crept up to the entrance, and called at first softly, and then in louder tones; but getting no reply, he sprung his lantern and crawled in. A glance around showed him that it was empty. With a great oath, he cried:

"Our bird has flown!"

"What—gone?" shouted the pirate.

"Yes. He has taken the alarm, or has been warned not to stay by, I begin to guess who."

"There is your thousand gone, lieutenant," said the pirate; "for, of course, we can't tell which way to look for him."

The young man growled some indistinct reply, and came out of the cave, his face inflamed with rage.

"Pull across with all your might, men," he cried. "He may yet be traced."

"How?"

"If the horses are gone, I know which way he is gone; and I will take another and follow, and raise the hue and cry on him. He can't have been gone long."

On reaching the bank and ascending it to the cross-roads, Robert Lee found the horses where he had secured them two or three

hours before. He uttered an exclamation of fierce disappointment.

"No, he has not gone the way I supposed. He must have had aid by the water."

"Well, let him off then," said the pirate, who stood by him. "I hope the plate and the maiden won't also give us the slip."

"Do not gore a wounded bull," answered Robert Lee. "I mean to keep my word. Mount one of these horses, and we will ride back across the bridge to the inn, and put them up. Then you will see that I can keep my word, and that you will find the plate I promised you."

They rode back to the inn, Robert Lee having first given orders for the barge to cross to the shore at the foot of the garden and there await orders. Adam Lee heard the noise of the hoofs of the two horses as they crossed the bridge; but as it was not unusual, in this disturbed time, for persons to be riding at all hours of the night to and from York, he did not heed them. Rosalie also heard the tramping of the iron-shod feet, as she lay awake upon her pillow, wondering if Ralph had got safely off with Arthur Percy, and praying for the safety of both. Like her father, the sounds of the two horses would not have attracted her attention, if she had not heard one of them neigh as it came near.

"That is 'Golden Feather,'" she exclaimed, starting up, as she recognized the familiar voice of her beautiful jennette. "Robert must have returned with the horses. He has doubtless been to the cave and found him gone. Will he suspect me? Will he come to me in a rage? Oh, how I tremble at his strange ways! What spell is it that he wields over me? How glad I shall be when he returns to sea again. He told me he was going in a privateer. I shall be in constant fear that he and Ralph will meet while he is on shore. Oh, noble Ralph! How superior to my brother? What comparison can there be between them? But I must not forget he is my brother! Yet, sometimes, I feel as if I were in an unnatural position, with such a father, and such a brother, whom I love with a sort of repugnance, and—shall I say it?—shame! The fulsome affection of my rough and profane father—the sickening titles of endearment he addresses to me, seem to me forced and unnatural. I cannot love him at all as I feel I ought to as a daughter; and as for Robert, I don't know why it is that I so of late dread him, and almost hate him! Yet the more I betray this feeling, the more wild and ungovernable seems his affection for me. If excess of love should call for grateful love in return, then ought I to love him. But every hour I shrink more and more from him. Hark! What whispering sounds are those?"

She raised herself upon her elbow; but she heard nothing more, and soon sunk into a quiet sleep, and dreamed of "gorgeous palaces and marble halls," and all the splendor which could fill scenes of luxury, wealth, and power. Such dreams she had often before had, and wondered that in her visions she should behold beautiful scenes, which, in her waking hours, she had no conception of.

In the meantime, Robert Lee, having put up the horses, returned to the inn; and, listening, and finding all quiet, and no light visible, said to the captain:

"Now you will see that I am a man of my word."

"I hope so; for as I have made up my mind to turn the Scorpion over to you for your own purposes, and retire on 'the plate,' I don't care to be disappointed."

"You shall not be. Now softly. Do not speak. Come with me. Here are two spades."

"Are we to dig a grave?"

"No; but lay open one."

They moved round the house, to the corner of the north-east chimney, in which was the fire-place that opened into Adam Lee's sleeping-room. Here they stopped, and Robert Lee, striking his spade on the ground, said:

"Here is the spot. We must dig down four feet, when we shall come to a trap. Lifting this, we shall find a small room, in which the chest is kept, and has been kept for years. How much is in it, I don't know; but I have seen the chest."

"Enough!"

The two men went to work; and in the course of half an hour had reached a thick, horizontal door. They cleared away the loose soil, and then proceeded to pry up the ends. It yielded, after several trials, and Robert de-

scended, followed by his accomplice. The lantern being opened, they saw that a large chest, black with age, and covered with iron bands, stood on one side.

"There is the treasure-chest," said Robert Lee.

"But it is not open!"

"We must hoist it out. Remain here, and I will bring up the negroes, with the rope. Hark! Some one is at the lock of this inner door. Be quiet!"

They listened, and were assured that there was an effort on the other side of a door to fit in a key. The two men stepped back, and, with pistols presented, awaited the result.

"If it is the old man, don't attack him!" whispered Robert Lee. "Whoever it is, don't fire; for the report of a pistol would be fatal to the treasure!"

"If it is the old man coming to look after his treasure, we will have to kill him!" answered the pirate-chief close in the ear of Robert Lee; "but I will do it with my hanger, if he is ugly, and so make no noise about it."

"If you kill my father, I will kill you!" answered the other.

Adam Lee was indeed unlocking the door to his treasure. After the inn had become quiet, he took up the hearth in his room, brick by brick, and, removing a covering to a stairway underneath it, he descended, with a light in one hand, and a rusty key in the other. He came into a passage that diverged from that one through which, a fortnight or so before, Rosalie had conducted the spy to his place of concealment, from which her brother had released him the next morning, only to betray him to Jack Speddon and his troopers.

What was the original use of these subterranean avenues, cannot be explained, save by a tradition in the neighborhood that it was in the days before the Revolution a smuggler's residence, who in these secret passages and chambers bestowed his unlawfully-landed goods. Following the passage a few feet, old Adam Lee began to fumble for the lock of a low door at its extremity; but first removing from before it several pieces of broken and ancient furniture which he had purposely piled up there, in order to conceal the door, and prevent further progress. The lock was thickly covered with cobwebs, so that the key-hole was matted by their accumulation, showing that the place had not been visited, years, at least, by that way.

It was his fumbling at the lock which was heard on the inside. At length he fitted and turned the key with a harsh, grating sound, and pulling open the door, he started back with horror at beholding two men in slouched hats pulled over their eyes, and one of them presenting a pistol.

He uttered a cry of mingled horror and alarm; for he saw at a glance that one of them was his son, and the other the pirate-chief, and he knew they had dug their way there, in order to rob him of his treasure.

"What do you here, villain?" he shrieked, inspired by the peril in which his plate was placed. "Leave here! Depart, or I will kill you!"

As he shrieked these words, he sprung upon Robert, and grasping him by the throat, threw him across the chest, while he grasped at the pistol which was in his belt in order to shoot down with it the pirate. But the latter cutting the back of his hand with his cutlas, caused him not only to let go the butt of the pistol, but with a scream of pain to spring upon the pirate.

"I am an old man, but I can fight yet," he shouted as he struggled for the possession of the cutlas:

The pirate drawing back, said, with an oath: "If you want it, take it, old man!" and drawing back, sheathed it to the hilt in his body.

With a groan of agony, and a cry of death upon his lips, the old man fell back upon the chest, from which Robert had sprung up again to his feet. Seeing his father fall, he did not hesitate an instant, but following the impulses of Nature, which crime had not wholly obliterated from his bosom, he rushed at the chief, as he shook upon the floor the warm life-blood from his blade, and cried:

"I said I would kill thee, if you slew my father!" and presenting a pistol at his head he snapped it. The chief at once grappled with him, and both men fell, and for a few moments—uttering the while deep and terrible oaths as they writhed in each other's hellish embrace—they struggled for the mastery. At

length, more youthful and agile than the pirate, Robert Lee got the uppermost, and pressing his knee upon the chest of his antagonist, he placed the point of the hanger at his neck, and with a curse of rage and triumph, drove the weapon into the jugular vein, pinning him to the floor. There were a few gurgling gaspings, a tortuous, eel-like movement of the lithe form, and then a sudden stretching out of the whole body stiff and stark. He was dead! What a dark volume had been sealed up of a mysterious human life, to be opened only when the Seven Seals shall be broken, and the books of the record of the biographies of all men's lives shall be unrolled! His name, his career, his infancy, his youth, his manhood, all his great crimes, though to us unknown, are not unknown to the One with whom all will have to do!

Robert Lee rose from the body of his captain. He stood gazing upon him by the light of the lantern which stood on the chest, close to his father's marble face, which, by its light looked fearful in the contortions of its death-thrill; for he yet breathed.

"He brought it upon himself!" muttered the young pirate, Robert Lee, as he gazed upon the stiffening features of the pirate. "I kept my word. I swore I would slay him if he killed the old man. And he, too, is dead! No, he speaks to me. How his eyes glare! What is it, father?"

"Rob—Rob-ert—I'm going! Stoop—hear! If you would—robbed—m-me! If you—you—you—don't—want a father's dying curse, do—what—I tell you!"

"What is it, father?" asked Robert Lee, who was bending on one knee, close to his father's lips, for he lay upon his back on the chest, as he had fallen under the murderous blow—the blood pumping and pumping, at every word he spoke, out of the wound, and flowing over his arm, and down his body upon the chest, which was gory with it. Robert Lee was not wholly unmoved! He had still some filial regard for the author of his existence. He was not wholly a devil yet. The scene about him was enough to make him serious; for the body of his friend and captain, slain by his own quick revenge, lay at his feet.

"Raise up my head, son!" his father gasped.

He obeyed.

"Swear to me!"

"What shall I swear?"

"That you will defend—pro-tect—and take home—and all the—the plate and jew-jewels in this chest! for it is—hers!"

"Do you mean Rose?"

"Yes, Rose! She is—is—Raise me up. I can—can't sp-speak! Onemin-ute more—to—to do justice to—to her. But—in the chest is a paper—I wrote—it. It'll tell you—I meant to—to do justice! Swear to me—to do it, or I shall—not—lie in my—grave!"

"You mean that I shall give Rose all the plate, and all that is in the chest?"

"Y-yes—it's—hers! Lift me up! I'm dying! Call her."

"No—I can't leave you," answered Robert Lee, compressing his lips; for he had no wish she should hear what he was saying.

"Swear then!"

"I swear to protect her!"

"And give her all?"

"Yes, if she marries me!" he said, with a deep and significant voice.

The dying man rose fairly to his elbow. The words seemed to inspire him with supernatural power over his dying body.

"Marry! It is as I suspected and feared. How knowest thou she was not thy sister? For thy words show now that my secret is thine!"

These sentences were uttered with rapid and nervous utterance, and with full strength of angry vehemence.

"In the way I learned that this treasure was here!" he answered evasively.

"And how—how knowest it—thou?" he demanded, sinking rapidly back again. And the shadow of death, which, for a moment had been driven away, returned with seven-fold darkness, upon his countenance.

"By one who knew thee, and was with thee when you captured the English ship off the island of Bermuda, and took a fair child and this chest-treasure, as your portion. You soon after left the sea, and came and bought

this inn, and settled here! This mate of yours came here with you, and helped you to conceal your chest—for one man could not alone lift it. You believed you made way with him when you drugged him in his bed, fearing to keep the secret with him, and threw him into the stream, with a bag of stones at his feet. But he was not drowned! The weight of the stones released him, and the cool water revived him; but he did not avenge himself, for he was picked up by a fishing-lugger which was captured by a French cruiser, and so he was carried over the sea. In the course of my voyages I have met him. He was then gray. We became acquainted. When he heard I was the son of the innkeeper of the Red Oak, he became interested in me. The result was, we became friends, because he had sailed with you. But it was only on my last voyage that he told me, while dying of a grape-shot wound received in action with a Spanish silver-ship we were attacking, about the chest, and the little fair English child you captured."

Adam Lee groaned, and then gasped:

"May John Cassin be accursed!"

"That was his name. He died telling me that the child Rose was adopted by you, and called your daughter; for my mother had been dead a year when you came back from your last pirate cruise, and took me from the woman she had placed me with! So I grew up with Rose, believing her to be my sister, and I loved her, and almost worshiped her. But the dying revelation of Cassin opened my eyes. He not only told me she was not my sister, nor your daughter, but that she was English, and evidently of high blood—as her father, whom you killed, was a great general, going out to command some army, or take some government, with all his treasures."

The dying man groaned, and seemed breathing his last under the pangs of a tortured spirit.

"He also told me how I could find your treasure-chest. So, when I returned home a few weeks ago, I was not long in verifying Cassin's words, by digging at a place which he said would bring me to the roof of the place where he had helped you place the chest. I found this room and saw the chest, and proved his words true. But I had no key; and satisfied with the secret, I covered up the hole I had dug, and by which I have now come down a second time to take it away!"

"To—rob, rob—m-me!" groaned Adam Lee, who was kept alive by the eagerness with which he listened, and by the aid of Robert Lee, who, pressing his hand over the wound, stopped the propulsion of the jets of blood for a few moments, while he spoke. He also wet his lips with a flask of brandy which he found in the pocket of the pirate, which revived him.

"Yes, rob you of what is not your own! But I value the secret that Rose is not my sister more than this chest full of silver. I have made use of the secret to try and make her love me, so that I can wed her!"

"She is a noble's daughter. Thou shalt not! For this I have kept the secret from thee. She has no suspicion! Take her home!"

"That is it. Now, you come to the point, father! Hold on now, till you get it out. Here is more brandy."

"I don't—kn-know—her father! We took—took the ship—by surprise, massa—and all but—a boat's—crew that escaped. I don't know her n-name—save Rosalie! She was but two or three years old—not more—and could tell nothing. M-m-m-more br-an—I'm—go—"

He placed the flask to his lips.

"Find—who she is? Take—her—home! Don't—harm—don't marry—her! She's too—good—for—for—"

The young man angrily withdrew his hand from the orifice, and with a great jet of red blood, the soul of the innkeeper, Adam Lee, went its way!

"Two dead men!" soliloquized the young man, as he wiped his father's blood from his hand! "So my Rose is a born lady as I suspected. Here, in this chest, is her dower. I shall get a lady for a wife (love me she shall), and this chest of silver honestly as her portion. So, then, I know the whole story. The old man meant some day to repent of his deeds, I dare say, and go and find her relations for her, and take back the plate; and so at last die in peace. No doubt his conscience

led him to preserve it to this day, it being the price of blood! But he's gone now, and it is mine; and as for Rose, I shall soon have her as mine. Now, how shall I manage? The chest of silver must be got out at once. These murders to-morrow must be known; and the house will be searched, and all will be lost! I will act promptly. The Scorpion is now mine! The men must be told the captain was killed by the landlord, who attacked us. I shall then easily take the command, giving each of them a portion of the jewels. But I will see what is in the chest." Taking the key from the body of his father, he unlocked the chest, and uttered a cry of surprise at the glittering spectacle which met his gaze.

"Enough for me and Rose, and to keep the crew in good-humor," he said, as he locked it again.

He then made his way out of the opening, and hastened to the barge. Here he told the men that they must at once come for the chest, and informed them that they had been attacked, and that the chief had been wounded. Four of the pirates, two junior lieutenants, a gunner, and quarter-master of the Scorpion at once went back with him to the rear of the inn. They descended; and finding that the chief was lying dead beside the dead body of the host, they had no suspicions of the part Robert Lee had taken in his death. Everything, therefore, was as favorable to him as he could wish. With as little noise as possible, the chest was removed and drawn out of the pit, and borne on the shoulders of the four negroes to the boat. On the way, Robert Lee said:

"Now, men, I am your captain, as next in command. Obey my orders, and you will not regret the change. In this chest is treasure enough for you and me."

This address was well received; for his courage in fight, recklessness in boarding, his forwardness in crime, and overbearing will, were all qualities which such officers and men as he was to command could estimate and duly respect.

When the chest was safely deposited in the boat, he said to his officers:

"Now, gentlemen, wait for a little while. You know the old man who is killed was my father. I have a sister in the house. She will be left alone. I wish to take her with me to sea! She may not be willing to go, and I may need force. One of these slaves shall come with me, in case she has to be carried."

He then left the water-side, followed by a stout Ethiopian naked to the waist, and went softly back to the inn.

CHAPTER VIII.

The room in which our heroine slept adjoining that of the host of the Red Oak, her nominal father; and the noise, whatever it may have been, which was caused by penetrating under the inn beneath his room, did not reach her ear, until the loud shriek of Adam Lee startled her from her slumbers. It was the cry the landlord gave utterance to on opening the door he had unlocked, and beheld the two robbers of his treasure standing before him, as we have already described.

"That was my father's voice," she exclaimed, with affright, "and it was a cry of terror. What can it be?"

She rose at once, with that courage which was ever characteristic of her; and striking a light with flint and steel, she proceeded hastily to half-dress, and hasten into his room. Her surprise at seeing the hearth taken up, and a pile of bricks upon the floor, was increased by beholding, beneath, a staircase leading to a dark passage. She stood a moment, looking down, when she heard voices and confused, subterranean sounds, like men in deadly struggle.

"Kind, merciful Heaven, protect me! What is this fearful thing?" she exclaimed. Then came to her ears the plaintive voice of suffering, followed by the fierce cry of Robert Lee, as he sprang forward to avenge his father's death. Unable to endure the suspense, she descended the yawning opening with her candle, and advanced along the passage. The draft of air blew out her candle, and she found herself in darkness—save that a faint gleam of light struggled toward her from the half-opened door which led into the treasure-chamber. She heard the terrific struggle upon the ground, and the death-blow given to the

pirate. But she could not, with her eyes, perceive all. She only understood that men were combating.

Then all was silence for a moment, when she heard the voice of Robert Lee. Softly she advanced; and looking in, beheld—herself unseen, for his back was toward her—the dead pirate-chief; and also the wounded "host of the Red Oak," lying across the chest. All this she was able to see by the light of Robert Lee's lantern, which stood upon the chest. She gazed, petrified and silenced with horror. She had not the power to utter a word, or give vent to her great terror. The instinct of self-preservation, combined with innate curiosity to watch the end, kept her heart still in its beatings. She heard "her father" speak, and would have rushed forward to aid him, but she felt that her brother's hand, already dyed with blood, would not, if need were, be withdrawn from her life—for she believed he had slain both of them.

As the dialogue between the son and Adam Lee went on, she became intensely absorbed in listening, and her senses became all ears, that she should not lose a word!

How wonderful were the revelations which were unsealed to her! How her heart beat hard, and strong, and rapidly, as she learned that she was not Adam Lee's daughter, nor the sister of Robert Lee! What a weight it lifted off her soul, and what a world of intelligence by which she was enabled rightly to read his strange and inexplicable love for her! All, all was heard by her that passed between the son and his dying father; and she could hardly contain her joy, even in such a grave and solemn hour, to know that she was not the daughter of that dying man, once a pirate, who had slain her father—nor allied by blood to his desperate and lawless son!

Clasping her hands upon her bosom, she stood until all was over, and the spirit of Adam Lee had passed into eternity. If Robert Lee had looked through the door, he could not but have detected the spirit-like figure, all in white, that stood in the darkness of the passage, listening, half-concealed. But he was too intent on his own reflections and purposes.

When she heard Adam Lee call for her, she had nearly betrayed her presence by advancing a step; but the voice of Robert Lee checked her footsteps, and so she was let into the whole mystery! Yet there remained another mystery—deeply, painfully interesting to her. Whose daughter was she? What general had been slain, as said Robert Lee, by Adam Lee, in the ship he captured? Had she a mother? a sister? a brother? What was her country? Perhaps England, as it was an English ship!

All these thoughts flew through her mind in an instant of time, as she stood there.

She now saw Robert Lee depart (as she understood from his spoken thoughts) to get aid to remove the chest. That he was in league with pirates she now knew, and she shuddered at the reflection that she had let him fold her to his heart but a few hours before. Oh! how she saw through all his wild love. She perceived how, learning she was not his sister, he conceived for her the wild passion which had so alarmed her and excited her terrors. All was now explained to her.

"But what shall I do? He will soon be here with his crew. If I am discovered, I shall perish. These lawless freebooters will show me no mercy. And this chest was my father's! and this treasure is my own! Oh! that I could obtain one piece of it as some clue to the discovery of my parents—for it may be marked!"

Risking the consequences of discovery, she entered the place and tried to open the chest. To her great joy it yielded. Robert Lee, in unlocking it, had only shut it, and not relocked it.

"It is mine: I steal from no one. I will take this bracelet, this locket, this ring, and this package of papers. He spoke of them," she said, as one after another of these objects met her eyes in an old velvet-colored casket. "They may help me, in my friendliness, to know who my parents were. I am sorry for this man's death. He has been kind to me, in his way. But, now that his hand put my unknown father to death, how can I grieve for his sudden end? Lo! he fell across the very chest for which he did the deed of blood. Is not this Heaven's retribution? Yet he would have saved the treasure for me. But what ben-

effit would it all have been to me—my father unknown; nay, it being the price of his life? Is it wonderful I instinctively shrank from the love of Robert Lee? I believed him my brother, and he knew that we were not allied to each other—pressed his suit upon me. Did he hope one day to make me his wife? Yet how could he, unless he revealed all. Perhaps he intended to do so. Hark! there are steps! He returns! I must conceal myself. Of all men on earth, I now most fear that young man. Yet how little he suspects I know all!"

She withdrew from the place deep into the passage, and saw them descend into the pit, and with ropes draw out the chest. When, at length, the last man disappeared, she felt a sensation of relief.

"I shall never see him again. He will go off to his vessel, wherever it is, with his treasure. If, in the morning, he comes back, he will not find me here. I dare not let the day-break and Robert Lee behold my face. There is no evil that he is not capable of!"

She then hastened up stairs into the room from which Adam Lee had gone down to his death—and going to her chamber, she proceeded to put together such apparel as she might require; for she had made up her mind to fly at once from the dreadful place. She feared not so much the presence of the dead bodies, almost beneath her very room, as the presence of the living Robert Lee.

In twenty minutes, she had collected her dresses, and such clothing as she might require for some weeks—not forgetting to place the Golden Feather in her bosom—and then, with tears in her eyes, at leaving the home of her childhood and years, her little room and its favorite ornaments, her canary-bird, pet rabbit, and more petted cat—and at feeling herself a lonely orphan in the world—she hastened from the house, to go first to that of the mother of Ralph; for what other shelter offered the helpless maiden?

The inn was quiet. The murders which had been committed had been done under the ground, where the noise could not be heard by the servitors of the inn. She opened, with a trembling hand, the outer door, which led upon the stoop, intending to gain the road by a side gate. Just as she opened the gate, she felt a hand laid firmly upon her arm, and a voice said:

"Where now, Rose? Are you going to meet Ralph Turner on a moonlight tryst? I hear he has got home."

"No, Robert Lee. Release me!"

"You are quite high in your speech and manner, girl, for an innkeeper's daughter," he said, tauntingly.

She was about to answer that she was not Adam Lee's daughter; but prudence warned her it would be unsafe by this assertion to let him know she had overheard what had passed; "and," thought she, "if I say this, he will also know I know of the murder, and he may silence me by taking my life. So she said, as firmly as she could:

"I am going to take a walk. I cannot sleep."

"Well, if you want to walk, come with me. I will ramble with you. The moon shines like a coronet of diamonds. Suppose we walk by the river side?"

"Robert, let me go back into the house!"

"No; you shall go with me. Come! gently, if you will; forcibly, if I must! Come here, Bacca!"

Instantly the wildest terrors filled her soul, for she saw the negro advance toward her with fierce looks. She felt that Robert Lee meant evil. She shrieked, and bounding through the gate, fled from him like a deer. In his surprise and rage, he drew and discharged his pistol after her. It did not stay her flight. She bounded across the bridge—her white robes streaming like angels' wings on the air, with the velocity of her speed. Not less swift did Robert Lee follow. He did not call, nor did she a second time open her lips, as if fear had frozen her voice. The pirates in their boat, beneath, saw her, and set up a cry that appalled her; and, recognizing their new captain (for the broad moon fell brightly upon the bridge), they aided his pursuit by discharging several pistols into the air after her. She seemed to carry a charmed life. Reaching the extremity of the bridge while her pursuers (for the African went, also, leaping after her with great bounds, more like an ouran-outang than a human being) were in the middle of

it, she turned down the path in which we recollect Robert Lee found her seated beneath a tree, when he made her take his three-fold oath—the motive of which the reader now plainly comprehends. Away, like a hare pursued by wolves, she ran, scarce touching the earth with her flying feet. The Ethiopian made enormous leaps, and gained upon her each moment, while Robert Lee called to him, as he ran, "not to lay hands upon her roughly, if he wished his life."

The path led in the direction of the humble home of the mother of Ralph; and it was the instinct of love which led her to take it. And where was her brave lover? or the spy, who also would have sacrificed his life to save her? They were together, in the skiff, on the way to the English frigate; for all these events—the reception of Arthur Percy by Rose, after his escape from prison; his secretion in the cave, by Robert Lee's aid; the arrival of Ralph from Lake Erie, and meeting with her in the garden; the carouse of the pirates in the inn; the resolve of Robert Lee to betray the spy, and his actual escape from the cave by the aid of Ralph; one and all occurred during this one night. Ralph and Arthur Percy had now been on their way three hours, for it was now but little after three o'clock in the morning.

And, lest there should be any confusion in the reader's mind as to times, we will here remind him that the story opens on the evening of this very eventful night, and that all the events which have occurred have—with one exception—taken place on this night, beginning at the moment when we introduced Rose leaning over the bridge, watching and waiting for Robert Lee to come up from New York with Arthur Percy, rescued from the death which he was to have suffered the next day.

The exception to which we have alluded, was the episode which we introduced in the second chapter, wherein we stopped the direct progress of the tale to go back to explain how Rose first met the spy, and became interested in him, when—a fortnight, or little more previous—he had applied, in the midst of a dreadful storm, for admittance at the inn.

The reader will recollect, that after we had explained this, and brought the personal story of the spy up to the very moment he is welcomed by her at the bridge stairs, after his escape, by Robert Lee's aid, from the gallows, that we again took up the thread of the story where we had suspended it; and from that instant our story has been onward, from event to event, still not yet advanced beyond the first night, on the evening of which we introduced our heroine to our readers, upon the bridge.

Having thus refreshed the memories of our readers—which, in serial stories, require, from time to time, a cue to what has been before done—we have a clear field before us for the further illustration of our story and its incidents yet to come.

Rose felt, as she flew, that she was running for life—perhaps honor. She knew the unflinching purpose of the man, Robert Lee, who pursued her; and now, knowing his secret, she had everything to fear if she fell into his hands.

It was half a mile straight down the river-bank, to the abode of the widow. The African came on, it seemed, aided by his long arms as well as his feet. The cottage was now in sight, but the negro was close behind her. She almost felt his hot breath upon her neck. She felt she could not reach the gate of the house. She shrieked for aid. The path led along the precipice overhanging the waters.

Suddenly, with clasped hands upraised to Heaven, and just as the Nubian's hand was about to seize her, she cried: "Better death than capture!" and sprung out into the air from the cliff, and descended thirty feet into the dark wave below.

The African, without hesitation, leaped after her. As she rose to the surface, she shrieked: "Save me, oh, save me! Save me, oh, mother, from Robert Lee!"

The widow heard the cry in her sleep, and arose and hastened to the window. She saw the savage madly lashing the waters; and, unable to swim, endeavoring to sustain himself with wild blows at the waves; but each instant he sank deeper, and, with a howl of rage and despair, disappeared. Rose, accustomed to swim, strove to reach the opposite shore; but the pirate's barge came bearing down, with full

oars, engaging in the chase, and being called to by Robert Lee—their captain—from the shore, to take her up, they soon gained upon her. Seeing that escape was hopeless, the young girl dived deep beneath the surface, resolved to perish; but, either the instinct of life prevailed, or she could not keep under, for coming to the top of the water, she was instantly seized and taken captive. The boat then pulled in with the insensible maiden, to take the pirate captain—as we must now call Robert Lee—on board, and who was calling to them to land and receive him.

"Now, men, for your lives!" he said, in a tone of command, brief and earnest. "The alarm has been given all along the creek. I hear dogs barking, and men shouting, and see lights in windows. Pull for your heads, lads!"

There were eight oars in the boat. Five of the pirates took each an oar, and the three remaining Africans. The sixth and oldest officer of the Scorpion took the rudder, while Robert Lee, taking Rose in his arms, supported her head upon his shoulder, her long unloosed hair falling in dripping tresses all over it. The barge was now pulled at great speed up the stream. It kept close in under the bushes that grew along the bank. There were four or five persons on the bridge as they passed under it, calling down to the boat to know what was the screaming, and firing, and shouting they had heard. Among them was Hobbs the ostler, the coach-driver, and the doctor, who was the most noisy and inquisitive.

"Bless me! Hulloa, the boat! What is it? Has there been anybody killed or wounded? If so, it is a case for me! Boat ahoy! What is the fuss?"

"It is me, doctor," answered Robert Lee, boldly; for, soon expecting to be beyond reach of any danger, he had no hesitation in being recognized. "We've caught the spy!"

"Bless us! that is news! How is his arm? I hope it healed at the first intention, and will get quite well before he's hanged. But that's a woman!"

"No. He was disguised as a woman, trying to get out of the country, and so we take him as he is!"

"Bless us, indeed! Did you ever?" cried the doctor, running across to the other end of the bridge; for the barge, by this time, had got up the stream, and soon was out of sight.

Hobbs shook his head. He said:

"I'm but a hignorant stable-man, but I don't loike the looks o' that boat. I see three black niggers in it, and the same set o' privateer-men, or pirate-men, as got drunk, early in the night, at the inn. I don't loike it; more, too, coz master Rob is among 'em; for where he is, you may be sure the old Satan is curryin' his horse for a race bent on evil."

"I'm sartain, mates," said the stout stage-driver, that ar' was a 'ooman; for, if the spy could get on women's gownds, he couldn't make his hair grow long like a 'ooman's!"

"I was wondering at that!" said the doctor. "It must have been a female. I never saw such long hair, except once when I happened to see Miss Rose combing her's, when the wind blew up the curtain as I went by. But what a scrimmage. I heard at least half-a-dozen pistol shots!"

"And sich hollerin' and yellin'!" said the stage-driver.

"And what's more, I certain hearn a squall like a gal a yellin' to the top o' her voice. Eh! who is here? It isn't a ghost, is it, doctor?"

They all turned, and beheld a white figure advancing rapidly upon the bridge, from the end opposite the side on which the inn stood. They all three looked a little startled, and the doctor began to take retrograde steps, when the figure spoke, with great excitement:

"Is it you, doctor, and you, Master Hobbs?"

"Ah! it is Mistress Turner!" said the stage-driver, re-assured. "She has got frightened out of her house, and run here in her night-gownd, skeered at the doin's. What is it, mistress?"

"Oh! neighbors, how glad I am to find you her. Such dreadful, horrible scenes. Poor, poor Rose Lee! They have carried her off!"

"Who? what? where?" cried the three men.

"In a boat! It rowed rapidly up the stream with her. I followed it as fast as I could!"

"It has just got out of sight," said the doctor. "Bless my body and soul! was that Rose they had?"

"Yes."

"But it was her brother. What harm can happen to her?"

"I don't know. But she came running down to my house, screaming for help. I got up to see what it was, and saw her leap into the river, followed by a terrible black man. As soon as she rose again, she shrieked: 'Save me, O mother, from Robert Lee!'"

"Did she say this?" the men asked, and others who now came up stopped to listen, until she had nine or ten men, chiefly farmers, about her.

"Yes. She tried to swim toward my house. I got out as soon as I could, not thinking of myself—only of her—when a boat full of men picked her up. The negro I saw drown before he could reach her. The boat was then rowed in to the shore, close to my gate, and I saw Robert Lee get in and give orders, as if he commanded the boat, which at once pulled up the creek!"

"Where is the boat?" cried several men.

"It passed up under the bridge, not five minutes ago," said the doctor. "It is strange she cried 'Save me from my brother!'"

"Not at all, friends," said Hobbs, the hostler, stoutly, if you knowed what I know."

"What do you know?"

"That she loves Ralph Turner, and he don't want her to love him nor nobody else. How did I find out? Why, I was over there in the maple wood by the water, about two weeks or so ago, lookin' after a stray horse, when I hearn talkin' close by, and listenin', I hearn Miss Rose and Master Lee. I can't go for to say all I hearn, but I hearn him make her swear a drefful oath she'd marry nobody, nor kiss nobody, nor speak to nobody he didn't want her to. Well, she did it—for he frightened her into it. Now, you sees, sich a brother don't act like one! and I guess as how he's caught her a sparkin' down by the widder's, to-night—or, better said this mornin', for I hear the roosters acrowin'—and she's jumped into the river afore she'd let him catch her! and so he got these privateer's-men as was carousin' to help him, and so he's got her into the boat, and is takin' her a' some'at place where he can keep her from lovin' Ralph Turner."

"That's it, Master Hobbs," said the coachman. "You've guessed the riddle for sartin! Now, coz he is her brother, he's no right to treat her in this fashion; and, as she cried out to be saved from him, I notion she is afraid he'll do something cruel to her."

"Where is Ralph Turner?" asked the doctor.

"He is not at home, at all," answered the widow, and Rose was not coming down to see him, for she knew he was gone. He left at midnight, to go down Harlem river."

"If he'd been there, he'd have given Master Robert Lee a different reception," said a young farmer, who held a flail in his hand, on which he leaned like a young Hercules. "When is he coming home, mistress?"

"Perhaps not for two days. If he was here, he would soon get a party o' brave youths and overtake that boat, and rescue the poor helpless girl from her brutal brother!"

"And, as he's not here, I'll take his place," answered a young fellow in a fisherman's garb. "Who'll volunteer to give chase?"

"Heaven bless you, Mark Manning!" cried the widow.

"Something must be done," said the doctor, "for as he has passed by the inn—where he ought to have left her—and as he denied who was in the boat, I begin to fear he has joined the privateersmen, and is going to take her off to their vessel—which is, I dare say, somewhere over in the Hudson. Indeed, as I was riding along yesterday, I saw two or three persons looking at a strange-looking craft anchored across the river, which they said was a privateer, but looked amazingly like a pirate."

The excitement now became intense, and seven young men volunteered to take a boat with young Manning, and go in pursuit.

pursuit of the pirate's barge. Like Ralph, he was a lover of Golden Feather—at least had been; but when it came to her turn to choose between the two, and she said: "Mark, I love Joseph best!" he, in the most frank and manly way, said: "I know, too, Ralph loves thee. So I won't be angry. Let us be friends, Rose, though we cannot be lovers!" He then shook hands with her, and with his rival; and from that moment—a year before our story opens—nothing had marred the confidence and friendship of the three.

How much better is this than resentment against the maiden who refuses the hand and heart offered, and revenge against the lover. There is no reason why a rejected lover should be converted into a relentless foe! How strange—how marvellous, to see two young persons, who were intimate last week, pass each other to-day with the air of strangers—almost bitter enemies. If a lover gets angry for being refused, all we can say is, that he is an exceedingly vain person, and, withal, self-conceited. Because a fine girl declines marrying a man, it is no reason she dislikes him. There is not one of the sex who is not willing to remain "friend" with a rejected lover, if the wounded vanity of the lover would suffer it. A lady esteems it a compliment to be loved, and to receive an offer of marriage; and though she may decline, for good reasons of her own, yet her gratitude for the preference given her would bind her to the discarded lover for a life of friendship, if he would permit. No—no! Sensible men know better how to behave in these cases; and if they can't win the wife, they won't be foolish enough to lose the friend.

With this little *morceau* of our private opinion on this delicate subject, we now resume our story.

The reader will remember that the last chapter closed with the crowd of people gathered upon the bridge, in great excitement at the events connected with the abduction of the maid of the inn by "her brother"—as all believed him to be. The statement of Hobbs, the hostler, about the oath he overheard, convinced all that Robert Lee meant evil to his sister:

"Yes," said the mother of Ralph; "and it is clear why! You must know my son, Ralph—"

"Hurrah for Ralph Turner! Hurrah for the hero of Lake Erie!" shouted several of the men; so that his mother, looking around, expected to see her son coming. But it was only the prideful adulation and applause of his neighbors, who had been reading of his exploits in battle.

"He got home last night," continued the widow, "and went to see Rose first. He then came home to see me about eleven o'clock, or perhaps, later. But he had only time to stay about twenty minutes with me, as he had some business to attend to for a day or two and left me. Oh, that he was here now! So you see that no doubt her brother, hearing that Ralph went to see her, has brought all this revenge upon her for Ralph's sake!"

"We will take her from him were he twice her brother!" said Mark Manning, resolutely. "We boys don't allow brothers, in these parts, to treat their sisters in this fashion. From all I can hear, Robert Lee has not got a good name since he has been at sea; and some people whisper that he has been in a pirate vessel!"

"That's what I hearn, too," said Hobbs; "and I believe it about 'un."

"You mustn't stand talking here, while every minute the boat is going further from us," cried Mark, who was selecting his party. In all, fourteen were chosen. They ran back to their homes for their arms—for in this warlike day every man possessed guns or pistols—and were to meet him in a few minutes at the inn stairs, where was chained a long, swift row-boat, which belonged to Adam Lee.

"And I wonder Adam Lee hasn't been up, and out!" said several voices, as the whole party proceeded toward the inn stairs, following Mark Manning—who had sent one of the men for his arms, while he went to rouse Adam up, to ask for the key of his boat."

"He won't let 'un have it," said Hobbs, "if he knows it is to chase his son!"

"But if he knows Bob Lee has run off with his sister, no one knows to where," said the coachman, he'll go, too, in it; for he loves her more 'n he does Bob—for, in my 'pinion, there wasn't much love lost atween 'em!"

"That there ain't," answered Hobbs.

The whole crowd now reached the front of the inn. The day was just beginning to manifest its coming by a scarcely perceptible grayish dawn. The moon, however, still shone as brightly as at midnight.

"We must turn him out—it is time he is up. Yes, we must have his boat, will he or not!" said some of the men, who began to shout:

"Ho, Adam Lee!"

"Up, Master Adam!"

"House, ho! Come, rouse thee, old Adam; thou hast more customers before thy door than thou hast ale for!"

All was silent.

Mark Manning shook the door. Others rattled at the shutters which we have seen Adam close so securely the last night.

"Come, we must either break in the door, or break the lock to his boat," said the resolute Mark.

"Then let us break in the door!" cried a stout fellow, throwing his shoulder against it.

"Nay," said Mark, "it is better to break the chain. So let the key go. Come, my lads, he called, as he saw his comrades running up with their guns, blunderbusses, old swords, and rusty pistols, "to the boat—we must take it!"

Scarcely had he spoken, when Hobbs, the hostler—who had gone round and threw open a window, which he knew of—threw open the door, saying:

"The old man is not in his room. I stopped to call him. He hasn't been in his bed; and there is a pile o' bricks on his floor, and things look strange like. I mistrust something!"

Mark Manning went through the tap straight to the bed-room. A lamp was just expiring upon a little table; yet it gave sufficient light to show the pile of bricks, and the cavity under the hearth.

"This is strange, neighbors!" he said. "Adam Lee! Ho, Adam Lee! Look over the house for him, and call him!"

He then took the lamp, and went and gazed down the dark, cavernous opening. He saw stairs, and asked for a candle to be lighted, which some one gave him.

"I will go down here."

"It may be he's been hiding something; I never know'd o' this place," said Hobbs.

"There used to be stories of money hid about here," whispered an old woman; "for once smugglers lived here, they say."

Mark went down the stairs, and, by the aid of the light, he found the passage-way, which he followed until he came to the door, which was ajar. Close behind him came the doctor, then Hobbs, then the coachman. As the young fisherman pulled open the door which swung toward him, he uttered a cry of horror, as his candle revealed to his startled gaze the glaring corpse-faces of the landlord and the strange captain! The doctor next beheld; and called aloud: "Murder!" The hostler, peering over their shoulders, uttered a shout of terror; while the coachman, crowding on to see what it was, absolutely roared with consternation at the appalling sight. One after the other, save the doctor and young Manning, retreated upon the startled crowd, halloing:

"Murder! Assassins!"

"What is it?" cried several voices.

"Adam Lee lies stark and stiff in his cellar, and by him the privateer captain!" cried the coachman, "both as dead as herrings. A foul murder!"

The excitement was now immense. The men and women ran every way, crying: "Murder!" Mark Manning and the doctor examined the wounds, and decided that they had mutually killed each other, fighting.

But we will not dwell upon this scene. The coroner and constable were summoned, and, after a full debate among them, it was decided that the privateer captain (who had been seen in the inn with his men) had either attempted to rob Adam Lee of some moneys he might have hid there, or of his wines; and that Adam, following him, had fought with him, and killed him, after being wounded himself! The doctor's evidence showed that the wound in the body of Adam Lee was made with the hanger which lay upon the floor; and Robert Lee, before leaving, had arranged the bodies in such a way as to appear to have fallen in fight, each with the other.

But Manning did not stop for the coroner and his jury; but leaving all this process to

CHAPTER IX.

The young fellow, whom the widow addressed as Mark Manning, was, next to Ralph Turner, the most suitable person to lead the

the little bustling doctor, he took the key of the boat from the nail, where it hung above Adam's bed, and hastened to the water-stairs. He was followed by sixteen young fellows, all armed impromptu. The boat was unlocked and manned, and pushed off, almost without a spectator, leaving the scene of murder behind—for the discovery of the dead bodies had drawn the attention of all to the subterranean chambers of the inn.

"Now, my friends," said Mark, "we have a serious work to do! It is nearly half an hour since Robert Lee passed the bridge toward the Hudson. It is two miles' pull nearly to the main river. He must be nearly out of the creek. Now, bend to your oars, for the rescue of the loveliest girl ever known. You have all seen Rose Lee. You know how beautiful she is! You know how I loved her, and was rejected for a better man than myself—Ralph Turner—whose bravery we are all proud of! Now, her brother, because he likes him not, has made her swear not to notice him; but, like a brave girl as she is, she has defied him, and he has carried her off!—where, or for what purpose, I know not! But, it is rumored, he is a buccaneer. I dare say, with truth. It is said that a strange vessel is lying in the North River, near Fort Lee. In fact, the privateer captain is said to have been seen coming from her to this creek. The gardener says he saw Robert Lee and this captain talking together in the yard, and heard something said about his vessel under the Palisades. Therefore, it is my opinion that Robert Lee has gone in his boat to that vessel, and takes his sister there! If we would rescue her, we must overtake the boat before it gets along-side of that vessel. Give way, strong and hearty, men!"

This address was made to them while they were rowing up the creek, with all their strength bending to their grateful task, with a good-will.

Mark Manning, who had been many cruises to sea in his father's fishing-smack, and once in a privateer from New London, was readily obeyed by his less skillful friends; and while eight of the sixteen men rowed, the rest examined the guns and pistols to see that they were ready for service. Among them, one gun without a lock, and another without a flint-stock, were laid in the bottom of the boat, as worthless.

"We muster," said Manning, "eleven muskets and fowling-pieces, and four pistols, besides five broadswords and six bayonets, and a scythe! This will do!—for there were but ten men in the barge, including Robert Lee; so the doctor said, who saw it, in the broad moonlight, pass beneath the bridge. Relieve oars," he said to his party, after the eight had rowed a mile along the winding channel of Spuyten Duyvel Creek.

The day was now bright and broad alight in the east, but the sun had not yet rolled up his mighty wheel of fire into sight! The gray shores grew more distinct, and the gorgeous autumnal tints became each moment recognizable to the eye. The reddish blush of morning soon overspread the heavens, and the scenery and the faces of all in the boat were as distinctly visible as in full day. Then the various garbs of the young farmers and others of the rescue party became apparent. There was Eli Gamble, the miller's son, in his mealy jacket and white breeches, all coated with flour, and his red locks—also as gray as an old man's—armed with an ancient musketoon, said to have belonged to a Dutch skipper, his great-uncle! There was Tim Tuppet, the tailor's dashing apprentice, with an enormous dragoon sword, as rusty and dull as a hinge, but heavy enough to kill a man, with the simple descent of its own weight! There was Ichabod Porter, the stout, good-looking blacksmith, who wielded not only a musket, but carried a small sledgehammer, sticking out of his smut-lined pockets! There was Jacob Browse, who was a joiner's journeyman, who shouldered a double-barreled shot gun; and his cousin, Dick Browse, who had a horse-pistol, loaded to the muzzle with horse-shoe nails, furnished by Jacob Browse! There were also Will Woolsey, the farmer; Alex. Ward, the farmer; Otho Newton, the ferryman; and George Budd, John Finch, Jack Shever, Jack Ballard, and Joe Dent, all fishermen, armed with muskets and harpoons. There was also the son of the village parson, Henry Ballard, who carried a brace of English pistols; and two

or three clerks of the village of Harlem, armed with guns and swords—some of them having been privates of a volunteer company, called the "Spuyten Duyvel Guards," which had only been disbanded a few months, in order to form a new corps to enlist under the Federal flag. One and all of these young men assembled, on the nonce, at twenty minutes' warning, to rescue (or at least attempt it) the fair Rose Lee—had been her admirers, the bolder of them her lovers, and the boldest had addressed her. Of these, Henry Ballard, the minister's son, had been the most refined and the most timid—for his was one of those sensitive and delicate natures which beauty awes and confuses, and before the bright glances of which all courages ooze out at the fingers. He had never addressed her; but had made up his mind fifty times, in the past three years, to do so. When, now, the alarming sounds which raised all the people who lived within half a mile of the inn roused him, and he learned the situation in which the overbearing conduct of Robert Lee had placed her, he hastened also to arm, and join the pursuit.

Thus these sixteen young men were bound together by one motive, and inspired by the same feeling. They constituted a brave, devoted, and invincible band, to whom, all chances being equal, she might safely confide her rescue.

While we have been enumerating this party of heroes, the boat was passing onward with all the strength of eight willing oarsmen toward the Hudson.

Mark Manning was at the helm—every few moments uttering an encouraging word, and even aiding the after-starboard oar with one hand. In the bows sat the others who were not rowing, awaiting their turn to relieve the rowers.

The day was already red in the east; and as they came, all at once, to the opening of the creek, and saw the broad Hudson flowing past them in its majesty, the sun rose and filled the world with light, as glorious as the third day of its creation, when it rolled up to the wondering gaze of Adam, after he had supposed it had sunk in night forever. Every sunset is a new creation!—every breaking morn is a miracle of Heaven; and as great a marvel as that first morning, when God said: "Let there be light," and "all the sons of God shouted for joy."

There was but one in the company of young men on whom the splendor of the new day made any impression. To his soul, all was beauty and glory; and he gazed about upon the rainbow-tinted forests, the dark cliffs, the vast woods, the shining hills, and gleaming river, with its eternal palisades, lifting their Titanic battlements to catch the first beams of the god of day.

The first use Manning and others made of the light was to scan the river and shores, with eagle glances, in search of the boat! They knew from the ripple on the water, ere they emerged from the creek, that it was not far before them.

"There it is!" cried Henry Ballard, as his eyes—admiring a lance of sunlight shooting down between the trees, on the east shore of the Hudson—caught sight of a boat passing directly through the shining beams, seeking the obscurity of the dark shadows of the bank.

"Ay," cried Manning, "it is the barge!"

The whole party at once set up a shout of joy and menace. The crew of the barge had already discovered them; and Robert Lee was seen to spring to his feet, and draw a pistol, which he seemed to level at the heads of the rowers, as if threatening them with death, if they did not now row with all their strength. As he was but a quarter of a mile ahead of the boat, he could distinctly see and recognize several of the young men, especially Mark Manning. He also knew the green and gilded pleasure-boat which belonged to the inn, and could guess why they were in it.

"Now, my lads, and friends all," said Mark, "we are to have an open race for the rescue! This boat, as the name on the sides, and the gilded feather carved on the bows, shows you, is 'The Golden Feather,' named after Rose Lee! It is a good omen! We are bound to rescue her! Look to your arms, you that are not rowing; and you will row with all your might. Harry Ballard, I will make you second in command! I will divide you into two parties! If I board them, you

will defend our boat, and manage it. If you board, I will do so! Give way, boys, all! They are but ten in all, including the three negroes! I see the fair form of Rose! See! Death to him! She is struggling to rise up, and make signals to us for aid, and he keeps her down; and look, the villain points the pistol at her head! Now, boys, if you have one spark of love for her remaining in your hearts, you will put me alongside that large in five minutes!"

"We must not be too precipitate when we come up, or he may shoot her," said Harry.

Manning shuddered, and then said, with a pale cheek:

"He dare not! He dare not! If—"

His attention was drawn by a shout from a lateen-sail fishing-smack close in by the shore, along which they were now rowing after the barge. It was from a fisherman on board. He was steering so as to meet them, yet giving the barge a wide berth.

"Ho! hilloah! Do you know them are be pirates you are chasin'?"

"Worse, if possible! But how do you know it?" demanded Mark, shouting back to the land, as he surged rapidly along.

The reader need hardly here be reminded that Mark Manning was yet ignorant of the true character of the men in the barge. It is true one of the young men had said that it was whispered that the party who were carousing in the inn were buccaneers, rather than privateersmen. But they only suspected from their conduct, their character. That Robert Lee had come home from sea with the reputation of having been buccaneering, was well known to all about Harlem; but our party of young men did not know but that privateersmen might not be quite as uproarious as any pirates under the influence of spiced ales and good wines. That the privateer schooner, so called, from which the barge came was a pirate, there was not one in the Golden Feather believed; for of late years a pirate in the North River had not been heard of.

Yet, during a war, when privateersmen (that is, private armed vessels) were sent out by merchants with letter-of-marque commissions from the government, to cruise against the enemy's commerce, it would not have been a very difficult matter for a regular buccaneer, under false papers, to enter the bays and rivers about New York, under the disguise of a privateer's flag. The class of vessels, long, low black schooners, which the lawful privateer-captain loved, was of the very character buccaneers made use of in their foraging cruises—lords of the wide main:

"O'er the glad waters of the dark-blue sea,
Their thoughts as boundless and their souls as free;
For as the breezes waft the billows foam
Survey their empire, and behold their home."

CHAPTER X.

"How do you know it is a pirate-boat?" called Mark Manning to the tall fisherman on the deck of the smack which was darting by toward the south, in the direction of the city.

"I know it well enough, Mark Manning," he answered. "I have been aboard. It was last night. I offered to sell them some fish. Such a blood-thirsty set never sailed in an honest craft! Moreover, when I got away I found this Frenchman swimming at my rudder ring; I took him in. He told me it was a pirate from the coast o' Nova Scotia. His vessel had been taken, and all sunk but him. They kept him because he was a carpenter."

Thus speaking, he pointed to a small red-haired man, who sat upon the hatchway, dressed in a blue shirt, and duck long trowsers.

"Who is the captain?" asked Mark, as his men continued to row on without stopping.

The man answered, but the first name was indistinguishable; but the words, "and Rob. Lee is his first lieutenant. I am on my way down to the city to let some privateers there know, in order to have him taken afore he gets to sea again!"

"Now, my men," said Mark, "we know what we have to do. These are pirates! Robert Lee is conveying his sister to his own vessel; for, without doubt, the man we saw dead was the pirate-captain of her. He is now, therefore, in chief command! You may judge that a pirate will have little mercy for any woman, even though she be his sister. He will marry her to one of his companions, or, Heaven knows! perhaps sell her for gold."

The Golden Feather flew over the water now like the wind. Her feathery bow cut the surface like a spear, and turned it over on either side of her pathway like arches of flowing silver, falling into foam.

There was an eager, earnest, resolute air on the faces of all. Some with their pistols cocked, or their guns brought to the shoulder, gazed upon the flying barge with set teeth and burning eyes. Mark stood at the rudder, pale, resolved, calm, and terrible in aspect. His breath was quick, and his chest heaved like a storm billow. He looked as if he could, with his own impatient will, give wings to his boat.

The barge was also doing its best. The pirates, urged by the voice and gestures of Robert Lee, sent their boat through the water at a rapid rate. But they were not fresh like their pursuers. They had passed the first part of the night reveling at the "Red Oak," and had no sleep the remainder; and they had been rowing steadily since they took the maiden out of the water, and received on board their new captain. Fatigue soon began to tell upon them.

Mark perceived that he gained slowly upon them, and encouraged his oarsmen.

The reader, in order to form an intelligent idea of the locality of the present scenes, is informed that where the inlet, or the mouth of Spuyten Duyvel Creek opens into the Hudson, the shore of the river on the north side of the creek extends half a mile westwardly before it bends northward to form the east bank of the river; and that the river here is more than a mile and a half in breadth to the shores of Hackensack; that Fort Lee is a short distance above on the west shore, and thence extends northward the great, natural wall of the mighty Palisades.

Robert Lee, finding himself pursued (not at all to his surprise, for he knew the firing and noise would rouse the people), kept close along the spur of the shore until he came to the headland, where the river-bank turned northwardly. Here he left the shelter and eddy, and steered directly across to Fort Lee, in a diagonal course. It was a good hour's pull to reach his vessel—anchored not far above the old, and then dismantled fort—especially with the current against him.

As soon as Mark saw him leave the land and strike across, and perceiving that he was going direct for his vessel, which was just perceptible, lying close under the gray cliffs, he cried:

"Now we shall have them!"

"It is a contest of strength!" said Harry Ballard, his fine eyes glowing with excitement.

"Huzza! huzza!" shouted the rest of the men. "To the rescue of Golden Feather!"

"Relieve oars!" said Mark, as he got fairly out into the open river—with the chase about eight hundred yards ahead.

The boat felt the impulse of her fresh oarsmen, and almost leaped her length out of the water at every pull. They rose to their feet and flung themselves back with the whole weight of their bodies upon their oars, until the water roared around her, and the wake boiled and seethed like a caldron.

The skippers who stood on the decks of their great white-mainsailed sloops, which were sweeping down the river before a fair wind, watched the race with eager interest, little comprehending its object; save those, close to whom the boats passed, and who could see the light of battle on the faces of Mark's party, and the arms in their hands. The whole population of the shore, as well as of the river, saw the pursuit and shouted their applause of encouragement—some supposing it a mere boat-race for a wager; others perceiving that it was a chase of war.

"It is a boat load of English prisoners as has escaped, I guess," said one skipper to his mate.

"It must be a boat load of smugglers," said another; "and that's a perlice boat a'ter 'em!"

"It is that privateer's boat that they are chasing," said some lookers-on from the shore; "perhaps the crew have committed a murder on land. That is Mark Manning at the helm. What can it all be?"

Ignorant of the true cause of the fierce pursuit and eager flight, one and all cheered the boat on board which the sixteen lovers of Golden Feather were, which now perceptibly gained on the barge, upon the stern of which Robert Lee stood, pistol in hand, and seem-

ingly with one foot on the form of Rose, keeping her down out of sight in the boat.

The race each instant became more exciting. The distance between the two boats grew less. At intervals, Mark's party, unable to suppress their feeling, burst out into a shout—a sort of battle-cry of defiance and vengeance.

"Harry, hand me your gun," said Mark. "It will send a bullet further than mine. I must fire upon Robert Lee, or he will get to the schooner yet, in spite of all our efforts."

"Let us all fire, Captain Mark!" cried several of the young men, cocking their pieces.

"No! You may hit her. You know I am a true and dead shot! I will knock him overboard, and then we shall have it our own way. Give way, one and all. Lay out all your strength, men. Now, steady! Ease your oars, all. Let her glide a second."

He raised the gun to his shoulder, and bringing the sight for an instant to the range of the person of Robert Lee, he drew the trigger. A flash, a loud report, and all eyes were fixed upon Robert Lee. They saw his hat fly off into the air, struck by the ball, while he returned the fire with his pistol, and a shout of derision, and mocking Manning on his poor gunnery. But fearing that other balls would come after him more steadily sent, he stooped, and raising the form of Rose in his arms, he held her before him as a shield, and, shouting, bade them fire—for there was a fair mark for their shots!

"The coward!"

"The cold-blooded villain!"

"The desperado!"

"The craven pirate!"

These were the epithets which this base and unmanly act brought upon him.

"You see, men," said Mark, "that he defies us, and does not mean to be taken. It won't do to fire. All depends on the oars! Each man who is not rowing will bend to an oar with his fellow—two men to each oar. We will yet come up with him."

The additional impetus of sixteen arms was at once felt. The boat trembled in every part like an aspen leaf. The spray dashed high on the bows, and fell in showers over them.

"Keep your powder dry! Turn down the muskets, or bring all the fire-arms aft here, Harry," he cried, with ringing and excited tones.

The barge also got new impetus, as Robert Lee threw overboard a cask of water, and then all the jackets of the men, and two or three pieces of plank, in order to lighten her. She shot ahead, however, only for one instant, and then the pursuing boat came on hand over hand, like the avenger of wrongs! Each instant lessened the distance between them, when a sloop descending the river passed so slowly between the pursuer and pursued, that the boat in chase had to hold up to prevent striking at full speed against her counter, and to delay full half a minute before it could proceed on its course.

There was a loud and angry denunciation by the young man of the skipper of the sloop, who, in his curiosity to see the pursuit, had luffed, and so checked the progress of his craft.

The barge profited by the delay, and went at the swiftest speed for the Hackensack shore, yet heading up toward the schooner, which each instant became more distinct in its dark form and sharp outlines, its raking masts and generally mischievous and bold aspect; for vessels have an "expression" to them as well as people, and one as easily interpreted by seamen. The peculiarly piratical character of this stranger—although she entered the harbor of New York under privateer's colors, and was suffered to pass up to her anchorage under the Palisades without hindrance, the day before the opening of our story—had attracted the notice of the people who lived about on the shores, and of the craft on the river. It is true, privateersmen, as we have already said, often affected a buccaneering look, and so this vessel might have passed for what she pretended to be, but for the foreign visages of the crew. It was this that mainly drew suspicion on her; for it was well-known that the crews of the privateers consisted almost wholly of Americans, while the men on board the Scorpion looked like Spaniards.

But we know why she is anchored there! Or does the memory of the reader require a little refreshing upon what we only hinted at before? That Robert Lee was at sea in a pirate vessel when he heard from the dying buc-

caner, Cassin, of the treasure-chest, we recollect very well. We also remember that he at once left the pirate vessel, and returned home on the Corvette Cyane, an American man-o'-war, on which he shipped as seamen. He came in order to avail himself of his knowledge of his father's secret to possess himself of his treasure, and also to secure the love, as "a lover," of Rosalie.

Before leaving the West Indies, he had planned with the captain of the pirate vessel in which he had been second officer, that he should, as soon as he had returned from an expedition to Jamaica, sail for New York; and, as a privateer, anchor in North River and visit him at the Red Oak, where the pirate chief, weary of his roving life, and getting gray, was to sell his captaincy to Robert Lee for half the treasure, and assist him, if need were, in conveying "his bride" on board his vessel.

We have seen how painfully and mysteriously to her Robert Lee made use of his secret, that Rose was not his sister! He hoped to win her heart as a lover, so that when—as he intended to do—he should reveal to her the fact that they were not related, she would be willing to become his wife. We have seen how senselessly and unnaturally he acted to secure her heart and affections to him as her future husband—defeating, by his gross ignorance of women and of love, the very object he aimed to accomplish. From the fact, too, that her supposed father, who was struck down by Adam Lee on board the English ship, was a man of rank, and had so large a quantity of plate, he hoped by marrying her to become enriched if he should (as he resolved to try to do), discover her family. It was, therefore, in order to compel her to marry him, if she should (on being told that she was not his sister) refuse, that he had resolved to take her, with the treasure, to the Scorpion.

"Once my wife," he reasoned, "I can then steer for England; and if I find she is an heiress, as I believe she is, to great wealth, it will all become mine!"

We now comprehend the motives which have been actuating the conduct and leading to the plans of Robert Lee.

Let us now follow him, as in possession of the treasure and of the maiden; but under other circumstances than he had contemplated, we beheld him approaching his vessel.

Once more the boat with the sixteen gallant woosers of Golden Feather recovered her lost headway. Robert Lee saw that they were gaining upon him faster than ever, for his oarsmen were weary with rowing after their night's debauch. He still held Rose between him and the fire of his pursuing foes! One of his men, who was now the first lieutenant, all at once threw down his oar, and said, with an oath, in Spanish:

"I am a gentleman, and I'll pull no longer. Let us face about and fight them!"

"Ay!" cried the other rowers, all of whom but the three Ethiops were inferior officers of the Scorpion, "let them come on!"

"They are two to one," answered Robert Lee. "They are furies armed. See the fierce resolution in their faces, as they look round while they row. We shall lose our treasure! Once more give way, my brave officers."

"Only on condition you give us all the plate in the accursed chest which makes us drag so heavily."

"It is yours!" he cried, almost wild with madness.

They once more bent to their oars, when Robert Lee, finding that the boat of avengers was coming in fast, suddenly unloosed from his waist a red sash, and placing it on the point of his dagger, he waved it toward the schooner—at the same time ordering his men to fire at the boat in order to attract the attention of the schooner, which was now but half a mile distant.

"Fire astern!" he cried. "I know the villains are beyond pistol-shot, but they may hear us on my vessel and send a boat to our aid."

The simultaneous discharge of eight pistols, the bullets of which ricocheted along the water and then sunk ere they went half way to Manning's boat, created a report which was heard on the Scorpion.

At the moment, the officer of the deck was smoking his cigarette, and idly lolling over the quarter, his men being dispersed in groups about the fore-castle at breakfast. He saw the two boats, as he did other objects moving on the water; but they attracted, at

their great distance, no particular attention, nor caused any speculation. But suddenly, the flash of the pistols and the confused, combined reports from the head boat, caused him to start from his attitude of indifference, and take his spy-glass from the top of the companion-way, where he had laid it some time before, after having in vain scanned the opposite shores in search of the captain and his large, and wondering why it had not come off during the night. The men forward, also hearing the distant firing, some of them rose to look in the direction whence the sound came, and could plainly see some one waving a red scarf toward them; but it was too far for them to distinguish with the eye who it was.

But the officer of the deck, the only one left on board, had no sooner placed his glass to his eye and taken one look, than he called out in a voice of quick and stern authority:

"Away, there! you second-cutter men! Man the long boat! Oars, arms, all! Not a moment's delay! It is our barge chased by a cutter crowded with armed men, not five hundred yards behind her! Tumble down into the boat all you quarter boarders! Each man take his cutlass and pistols! Lively—lively! they gain upon them!"

The long boat, which would hold thirty men, and was pulled by twelve oars, and which lay along side, was in a few moments filled with armed pirates, and two ordinary boat's crews with oars, headed by the captain of the fore-castle guns.

"Give way, hard and strong, men! If you get there in time to give relief, don't pursue the other boat. We are in no place to show fight. Break your backs, there, you fellows! you've not a moment to spare."

The long-boat darted away from the Scorpion with a head of foam roaring about her bows, while the pirates set up a shout intended to intimidate the pursuing boat.

"Confound the captain and the officers," said the quarter-master; "they have got into some quarrel and betrayed their cloth, and this comes of it. But where is el capitano?" he continued, his glass at his eye. "I see only Lieutenant Lee in command of the boat. Has old gray moustache been killed in a fray, ashore? A young girl, too! Ah, yes; there was something said about one to be brought off—Lee's sister. A nice place this for an officer's sister. Every man to his taste! There goes the long-boat fast and free to the rescue. They will get there in time. No! What is that? An enemy from a new quarter!"

While he was speaking, he saw the long-boat a scene of confusion, broken oars flying into the air, pistols and men, while the roar of a heavy gun revealed the cause. A cannon-ball, from an unseen source, had struck the long-boat in the midst, not only killing three of the pirates, but breaking the boat in two and causing her rapidly to fill, while the surface of the river around it was black with the heads of the drowning or swimming buccaners on whom this sudden vengeance had fallen.

The quarter-master was not for more than a moment ignorant of the source of this well-aimed shot. The forward deck of a handsomely-painted new Albany sloop was half-veiled with a cloud of smoke, while three or four men were seen on board gathered about a swivel which they were reloading.

The skipper of this sloop, in coming down the river before the wind, seeing, while yet some distance off, the chase, had, with a spy-glass, been enabled to perceive that it was a party of armed young men in pursuit of a boat full of Spaniards and negroes bearing off a young girl. With an honest and plain man, duty and common sense need no teaching. He saw at a glance that there was mischief; and steering near Mark's boat, he hailed to know if he wanted help.

"Ay, captain," cried Manning. "The chase is a pirate running off with one of our village girls."

"Then here's at him! Boys, bring that swivel to bear on the boat!" shouted the skipper, luffing with the wind, all shivering.

"Not for the world! You will kill her!" cried Harry Ballard. "But there comes a boat to help them; you can blaze away at that!"

The skipper himself sighted the six-pounder swivel, which he carried only to fire salutes with on coming into port, and when the launch had got half-way to the barge, he fired.

At the result, the party under Mark set up a wild cry of victory, while the oarsmen of the barge under Robert Lee seemed appalled; for they suspended for an instant their rowing; but he leveled his pistol at their heads, and menaced them on.

The Golden Feather now bounded ahead with new spirit, when the quarter-master, who had already given orders to make sail and slip the cable ready for flight as soon as the barge should (if possible) reach the schooner, seeing that it was in danger of being boarded by the pursuers, brought a nine-pounder carronade gun to bear on Mark's boat. While it was being charged with grape, a part of the crew were making sail, a part had cut the cable, while half a dozen in a small cutter had gone out to pick up their drowning mates.

"Malfecho! This is the last day-light those fellows shall see!" cried the quarter-master, as he touched the priming with his cigar.

The gun, overcharged, rebounded so with the discharge, that the shower of deadly missiles flew over the heads of the party of young men, roaring, whistling, shrieking in the air, as if a troop of screaming devils had darted past, invisibly. The brave band of youths, instead of being appalled, pressed forward, encouraged by the voice of their leader, which now rung with the metal of battle.

But all in vain. The schooner, under her jib and fore-sail, and released from her anchor, was adroitly steered toward Robert Lee's boat, picking up, by ropes thrown over, the swimmers, until the barge was met by it and pulled to the gangway, with the last expiring strength of the rowers.

The first words that Robert Lee uttered, as he came alongside, was:

"Give them a broadside at once, Domingo. Sink the scoundrels!"

Rose, seeing that she was now wholly in the power of this dreadful young man, whom she now knew to be a pirate, uttered a cry of despair, and would have sought shelter in the bosom of the river, but for his intervention. She was lifted on board, and borne by him to the cabin, more dead than alive.

When Manning and his friend saw that the barge was safe under the guns of the schooner, there was at first a desire to pursue and board her; but wiser councils prevailed over a course that would have been direct madness; for they could see that the vessel carried nine guns—four carronades to a side, besides a long fifty-six on the fore-castle.

The schooner also rapidly moved down the river, dragging her boats after her, her ports open and her men at the guns, as if defying attack or attempted capture. The broadside was not discharged, from motives of prudence; for, on second thought, as he came up out of the cabin, Robert Lee felt that any extreme hostilities like these would bar his course to sea—if it would not be already barred; so he crowded on all sail to escape from the river, triumphing in the possession of Rose Lee and her treasure of silver.

CHAPTER XI.

Mark Manning and his party, though foiled in capturing Robert Lee's boat, and rescuing Rose from her wicked "brother's" power (for her brother he was yet believed to be), resolved not to abandon all hope of recovering the lovely girl from his grasp. As they saw the Scorpion spreading all sail to escape down the river, he gave the word to pull hard and fast to the city, in order to give the alarm, and try and cut the pirate off from the sea.

"The wind is not so strong but we can row faster than she can sail," said Mark. "There is a new privateer anchored off the Battery, which, when I was down in the city, three days ago, was shipping men. She was fully equipped for sea; but her captain, they said, had not been appointed. If we can get word to her, she can, with a broadside or two, check the career of this Robert Lee!"

So the young men bent to their oars, and went down the river like an arrow. The Scorpion kept near the Jersey shore, and setting her flying gib and fore-top gallant-mast, and gaff-topsail, glided swiftly and silently down the stream.

But the wind increasing, as if to favor her escape, the Scorpion soon forged far ahead of the pressing boat, and when opposite Hoboken had left Mark and his crew a mile behind. Each moment the pirate slid away from

his pursuers; got opposite the city, which it passed, boldly, and laid her course for the Narrows. But the fishing smack, which we have already spoken of as steering for the city to give the alarm had already made known to a revenue boat the character of the schooner up the river; and the boat put off to the privateer vessel, in order to make known the fact. But there was no officer in command on board, only a ship-keeper, and he stated that there was not crew enough on board to do anything; and, in fact, that he dare not move an anchor without orders from the owners on shore. Nothing discomfited, the revenue boat pulled into the Battery, where a park of guns was kept, but the captain was away; thence to Governor's Island, where was an open battery in embrasure! It was not the present fort, but merely a breast-work mounted with long eighteen and twenty-four pounders.

Scarcely had the officer in command heard the news than the suspicious schooner came in sight, dashing toward the passage between the island and the main. The officer—although most of his men were in the city, like the commander of the Broadway Battery, in order to add *clat* to the military reception of the hero of Lake Erie, the youthful Captain Perry—at once got two guns to bear; and when the schooner got within range, opened his fire.

Mark Manning saw, a mile and a half off, the flash, and heard the thunder of the gun, and his heart became almost dead within him:

"They know not what a treasure that schooner holds, or they would not fire! The shot may kill her!" This last pronoun showed what treasure was in his thoughts.

"Heaven preserve her! There goes a second gun!" cried Henry Ballard, standing up with excitement, and watching with dread the effect of the firing. Shot after shot followed. The schooner did not respond, but kept on her course, with desperate recklessness.

"The pirate seems to be guarded by a spell!" said Mark. "Not a shot has hit him! See, I believe he is beyond range now, and showing his heels at the fort!"

It was true! The Scorpion having received a shot through her fore-sail, and another between wind and water on her larboard-beam, passed swiftly out of range, and laying her course for the Narrows, soon faded away from sight in the hazy atmosphere that hung over the Lower Bay.

By this time, the party commanded by Mark had reached the Battery, at the extremity of the city, but hopeless, sad, discomfited. The firing had brought an immense crowd to the landing, where, feeling it was useless to pursue farther, he steered the boat in. He was soon surrounded by numbers who made numerous inquiries, and when it was generally known that the escaped vessel was a buccaneer, which had ascended the Hudson under the flag of a privateer, and carried off the loveliest maiden of Harlem or all the country round, and murdered Adam Lee in his own inn, the excitement was very great. This being the day on which Perry was to receive the ovation of the city for his gallantry, thousands were congregated there from all the vicinity, for leagues. The appearance of this party of sixteen young men, armed and resolute, attracted universal attention; and while Mark was relating to a colonel of the city troops, who had been drawn to the spot, the facts, a person came up, and said that Commodore Perry, who had just then arrived at the Mayor's house, the last house in Broadway on the west side, opposite the north gate of the Battery, having been told the facts, had requested that Mark should come and see him, as he desired to hear from him the particulars. He, therefore, not a little proud at the honor of being presented to the great naval hero of the day, left Harry in command of the boat and of his men, and went with the messenger. He felt sad and disappointed at the escape of Robert Lee with his sister; but he tried to bear up, and meet the hero with cheerfulness and self-possession.

Until the victory of Lake Erie, a succession of disasters from the British arms had visited the frontier along the lakes. National confidence, patriotism, public spirit, were paralyzed. At this critical juncture, Perry won his brilliant victory upon Lake Erie. It electrified the country with joy and confidence; credit, patriotism, and pride of country were at once restored. The hero of this victory was hailed, from Maine to Louisiana, as the

"Deliverer of the Frontier," "The Conqueror of the Conquerors of Europe," and as the "bright, particular star" in the constellation of American naval heroes.

Every American bosom beat with joy. Public rejoicing bore testimony to the gratitude and happiness of the nation. In the principal cities illuminations took place, and every village participated in the general joy. "The merchant," says the historian, "laid aside his ledger; the mechanic, the implements of his trade; the man of business suspended his enterprises; the laborer, his toil, and the speculator, for the day, forgot his dreams of gold; while woman, beautiful and patriotic woman, uninfluenced by the allurements of other objects, and the blandishments of personal admiration, lent to the scene all her sweet influences, and all the charms of her presence!"

When Mark was ushered into the presence of the hero, who stood in the drawing-room, receiving and shaking hands with all who crowded forward to do him homage, he bowed with modest self-possession, and stood aside admiring the handsome face, gallant bearing, and resolute, yet courteous aspect of the hero. After a few moments, when there was a cessation in the rush of visitors, Captain Perry said:

"Step aside with me, here, by the window." And standing in the easternmost window, on the south side of the house, looking out on the Battery, he said: "You are the young sailor who has reported a buccaneer vessel to have just gone to sea?"

"I am hardly a sailor, sir, but rather a fisherman."

"Of which our best seamen are made. Tell me what you know of the escaped schooner. I have heard only confused reports!"

"Two days ago, sir, an armed schooner, under a privateer-flag, came up as far as the Palisades, and anchored. Last night she sent a boat, with seven or eight foreign-looking men, into Spuyten Duyvel Creek, to the Red Oak Inn, by King's Bridge. There they caroused till after midnight, and then departed, after murdering the inn-keeper, leaving their captain dead, and carrying off a young girl, Rosalie Lee, the inn-keeper's daughter, the loveliest maiden in all that region! I, with a dozen and more of my companions armed ourselves, took a boat, and gave chase!"

Mark then went on briefly to give an account of the events which followed, and the successful escape of the schooner out to sea, defying pursuit, and mocking at the batteries.

"What was the name of the schooner?"

"I do not know, sir. But there is a man in my boat, whom I took charge of as soon as I landed here who had been in the pirate vessel, and escaped, and was taken up by a hallop. The skipper has but just now placed him in my hands; for I at once felt the importance of having him to obtain information from!"

"You were very prudent! Will you go and bring him here? What is your name?"

"Mark Mannigg."

"I shall not forget you. Return immediately with your man."

Mark, on reaching the quay, found the man the skipper had picked up, who was a little Canadian Frenchman, and the sole survivor of the Nova Scotia shallop which the pirates had, as the reader is already informed, captured at sea, saving him only because he was useful for his trade. He soon brought him before the hero, who thus questioned him:

"You were a Canadian Frenchman?"

"Oui, Monsieur Capitaine!" answered the petite man, bowing to the ground.

"You were captured by a pirate?"

"C'est vrai, Monsieur! Diable buccaneer! He tué—what you call—kill moin brot'er, mon père, my vou little brot'er, and un, deux, trois plus des hommes! Dey keepe me—moi! parce-que moi—Je cut, saw, nail down—hammer—one charpentier. Dey kill like sheeps—moutons—toute le monde! Tres mal! much bad people! Capitaine—ma foi!—diable soi-même!"

"What was his name?"

"Je nevaire hear nothin', mon capitaine!"

"What was the vessel's name?"

"Le Scorpion!—diable nom!"

"How many guns?"

"Huit, vot you call hem—eight! Nine-pound shots, et un gran' magnifique cannon cinquante-six livres de shots!"

"How many men?"

"Quarante-vingts, what you call—eighty men!"

"Where did she sail from to come to this port?"

"Jamaïque!"

"How long have you been in her?"

"Sev-en mont! Four cruise."

"Have you any idea where she is now bound to?"

"Angleterre! I hear dem speaks 'bout sailin' dare wid de new capitaine!"

"What new captain?"

"De Monsieur Lee, première officier, I hear speaks, vas to be capitaine after de pirate got into le rivière de Hudson. I hear de capitaine talk 'bout some ma'm'selle to go, vot you call d'allier, in de vessele to L'Angleterre when dey catch her an' bring her board!"

"Do you think she has now sailed for England?"

"Dat I tink. Je ne sais pas. Me don't know. Me believe dat is so!"

"Now, my young friend," said Perry, addressing Mark, "you see we have got out of this poor fellow all he knows. The schooner is plainly a buccaneer. She has effected the purpose on which she seems to have ventured into these waters, viz., in carrying off a young lady! It is possible she has gone to England. What is there peculiar in relation to this maiden thus openly carried off?"

"She is very lovely, and the daughter of Adam Lee, the innkeeper at King's Bridge, who was early this morning found dead in his wine-cellar. By his side lay the body of the pirate-chief, as if he had been slain by the landlord in defending his life, or perhaps money."

"It was, then, probably an affair of love. The pirate who has abducted her is her lover!"

"By no means, Captain Perry," said Mark, with emphasis. "The new captain is the brother of the young girl!"

"The brother?"

"One would believe not from his conduct toward her. He has ever been a tyrannical brother, and of late as jealous of her as a lover! He has recently made her take oath not to speak to, look upon, or marry any young man without his permission. We believe it is because her lover came home yesterday, and went to see her; that the brother, finding it out, has taken her to sea with him. He was once a sailor, but became a pirate, and it seems was really attached to this pirate vessel, although he came home from sea some weeks ago. But she is hardly arrived ere the officers are at the inn of his father carousing and whispering with him, as I hear say."

"It is a singular tale! Who is her lover?" And the hero looked half smilingly, as if he thought he beheld him before him.

"The whole party with me have been at one time or other Rose Lee's lover, sir! But when she preferred another to us, we thought no less of her; and late events have showed he was worthiest of her of us all."

"That is a right, generous, and manly speech," answered Captain Perry. "Who is the favored youth? Methinks he ought to have been in your company, if not its leader!"

"So he would have been, Captain Perry; and perhaps if he had been, we might have succeeded better, though we did our best."

"I dare say you did. I heard you pulled up under the very guns of the schooner, and even stood her fire of grape in your open boat!"

"I wish now we had boarded her, sir, though the wind pushed her ahead faster than we could row, and we were pretty tired. I wish Ralph had been with us. As I was saying, sir, he left last night on business for a day or two up East River."

"A pity! Ralph who?"

"Ralph Berry Turner, sir."

"What, my brave fellow Ralph, the boldest heart that ever beat beneath a blue jacket! He was to be here to-day. Is he the lover? Poor fellow! This will be hard news for him to hear when he gets back."

"Indeed it will, sir. I should be sorry to be the one to break it to him. His mother thinks he will be at home to-morrow."

"I was in hopes to have seen him to-day. He is invited with other of my officers to the great ball to-night; for he is to share some of the glory of the victory to which he so largely contributed by his valor. I am, be

assured, more and more interested in this fair maiden's fate; for a cruel brother may be as dreadful a tyrant as an unprincipled suitor."

While he was speaking, an usher of ceremonies came to the window, and said:

"The crowd is gathering again in the hall, and are urgent to be presented to your excellency."

"Come to see me to-night. In the meantime, try and find Ralph. Where does his mother reside?"

"Nine miles from here."

"See her. Ascertain where he is gone, and if he can be sent for. Tell him without fail to hasten to me. I may be able to serve him in his trouble. Come you with him, if you will, also. Now, farewell! Be diligent in finding your friend without delay. As for this Canadian, keep him with you. He may be of service, there is no telling."

Mark then left the presence of the hero before whom the whole city was doing homage; and hastening to his boat, leaped on board, and gave orders to start for home again.

"I go to find Ralph," he said. "The commodore says he must be at once found, as he has something to propose to him. Let us pull round the Battery, so up East River and Harlem River to the Bridge. We must also keep this man with us. He has given us a great deal of information about the schooner, drawn out of him by Captain Perry, who, boys, has the kindest heart in the world, and his eyes glistened when he was told that Ralph (whom he seems to love almost like a brother), was betrothed to Rose Lee, so cruelly carried away by her lawless brother. His eyes also flashed through his tears with angry indignation at the daring act. He wishes to see Ralph at once. He has something on his mind to propose to him about the matter."

While Mark was absent, several of the population who admired the heroism of the young men had brought them fruit, cakes, and coffee from the stalls, which were erected about the Battery fence as on a Fourth-of-July day; for the reception of Perry was a universal holiday for the city and country. Mark was also pressed to refresh himself, for it was now past ten o'clock, and they had been fasting since the evening before.

The boat now got under way again with eight oarsmen; and as it rounded the Battery, its occupants were cheered by the populace. Passing around the shipping part of the town, they rowed on by Corlaer's Hook, and so successively passed Blackwell, Ward, and Randall's Islands, until they entered Harlem River. By one o'clock they were at King's Bridge again; and great was the sorrow of the people when they heard of the want of success of the party. On their way up the creek to the bridge, they had passed the house of the widow, where Mark sprung on shore to inquire about Ralph—leaving the boat to go on to the bridge without him, under the charge of Harry Ballard. It was with melancholy and gloomy feelings the young fellows sought each his own home, surrounded by relatives and friends who rejoiced to see them returned once more, sound and safe; far from emissaries near the river the chase had been witnessed, and many a mother and sister's heart failed with fear when they beheld the distant firing, and saw the flash and heard the thunder of the cannonade as it was discharged from the schooner.

"And did he say he should be gone three days?" asked Mark, of Ralph's mother, whom he found in her house weeping over the fate of Rose, saying she knew her brother would kill her, rather than she should be rescued.

"He did not say certainly, Mark. He did not not know how long. It might be a day—it might be three."

Mark then told her what Captain Perry had said, and ended by asking her to tell him exactly where he had gone.

"I can go and meet him, and hurry his return."

The widow was troubled. Dare she confess to the young American that his friend had gone, at this crisis of all others, to escort a spy to a British frigate up the Sound? Several times the information was upon her lips, but she suppressed it, for fear it would not do to trust him with so dangerous a secret—especially as Ralph was his successful rival. If the widow, however, had known of the deep fountain of native honor and gentlemanly feeling in Mark's bosom, she would readily have trusted him.

"He went on secret business, Mark. I cannot tell you; but the moment he returns, you shall know it. I trust he will be back to-night, for I do wish him to see Captain Perry."

"I shall feel for Ralph when you tell him Rose is gone," said Mark, feelingly, as he rose to go. "We did our best to rescue her; and he will believe us."

"That he will, and thank you with all his heart and soul," said his mother, as Mark went out.

When Commodore Perry had some respite from the crowd by the arrival of the dinner-hour, he was conversing with the captain of the fort, and the mayor, and some officers, upon the bold proceeding of the buccaneer schooner. He was warmly regretting that the privateer (the only armed vessel in the harbor, at that time—the ships of war being cruising at sea after the enemy) was not in fighting trim to have given chase, when a lieutenant of the navy in his suite, said:

"She could be got to sea, sir, I am told, in thirty hours, if the seamen only knew who is to command her."

"What, has she no captain?"

"No, sir. The six merchants who own her and have fitted her out, found, last week, that the captain they had chosen was not a reliable man, and they have withdrawn his commission."

"As soon as a captain can be found will men enlist?" demanded Perry.

"At once, sir," said the captain of the port, "if he is a man of the right metal, and they have confidence in him."

"I know the man for them," answered the commodore, slapping his hand on his knee, with loud emphasis. "Who are the merchants who fit out the vessel?"

"I can send them to you, sir, in half an hour," said the mayor.

"Do so; at least, the chief men."

Within the time, four of the rich merchants of the city presented themselves before him, and said that, hearing he knew of a suitable captain for their privateer, they would gladly take any man he recommended.

"What say you, gentleman, to Lieutenant Ralph Turner? His name and deeds are not unfamiliar to you!"

"We should be glad to get such a man."

"I think you can get him. I will let you know to-morrow, or by the next day."

"If he will accept it, we will confer the command upon him," answered the merchants; and the interview terminated.

CHAPTER XII.

We now return to our hero, Ralph Turner, in the anticipation of whose unhappiness, when he shall hear the terrible news of the abduction of Rose, in a pirate vessel, we are sure our readers sympathize.

We left him, as the reader will remember, returning in his skiff from the British frigate, on board which he had placed in safety the spy, Arthur Percy, in compliance with the promise he had made to Rose Lee the evening previous, in the garden alcove by the inn. It was an errand which was by no means of a kind agreeable to him, inasmuch as it seemed like acting a part against his country, for which he had been fighting so gallantly, to connive at, nay, actually accomplish the escape of a foe, whom the just laws of the land had condemned to death. But love is stronger than patriotism, although the old knightly war-cry of

"For God, my lady, and my country!"

would seem to give the sentiments an equal place, and put them side by side with holy faith. Let those young men who read this not condemn our hero, until first they have proved their devotion to their country by shedding their blood in arms for it; and next, until they have been placed in his position, with one dear to him as life placing the life of another at his disposal, or urging him, "for her sake," (oh, magic words to the true and young heart!) to save it.

Ralph, after leaving the ship, the wind being ahead, had to beat in long tacks to and fro across the Sound; and it was late in the afternoon when he passed through Hurlgate, then roaring with the wild confusion which led the ancient Dutch burgomasters and skippers to give it a name signifying their belief in the tradition that it was the veritable entrance to Hell. But the tide be-

ing at half-flood, it was divested of the fearful aspect which at low water it assumed; and Ralph, who was familiar with the waters all about East river, passed through it in safety, although his little bark was tossed and whirled about in the complex vortices of the boiling surface like a cockle-shell in a seething cauldron.

Just as the sun was descending the western sky in a flood of gold, he entered Harlem River; and taking the wind on his larboard beam, he was able to lay his course up the stream. He had not proceeded more than two miles, when coming to the rapids, he saw two men fishing, one of whom, on seeing him sailing past, hailed him, and said:

"Ho, Master Ralph Turner! Is that you? We've heard of your brave deeds!"

"Yes," called the other; "and we are glad you've got back safe and sound from them bloody wars you've been in! Are you just up from York? We heard you was a-comin'."

"I got home yesterday, and have only been down the river."

"It's a pity you was away. Such doings!"

"Yes," shouted the other, as Ralph sailed on. "Have you heard the news?"

"What news?" and Ralph luffed a little to check his speed.

"About the pirate and Adam Lee murdered last night, and—"

"Adam Lee murdered!" exclaimed Ralph, starting up. "And by whom? Where is Rose? Is she safe? What is it all? Who did it? Tell me, men—I've heard nothing! Only tell me if Rose is safe!" And he steered his skiff straight over to where the two men, whom he knew very well, were seated in their boat.

"Well, all we know is this," said the elder of the two.

"But Rose?"

"Well, I guess she's safe—for her brother took care of her!" answered the younger.

"How was Adam Lee killed?"

"As I was tellin'; a privateer schooner was anchored over in the Hudson, and her captain and crew pulled ashore, and had a carouse at the Red Oak."

"Yes, yes—I know it! I heard them. Go on."

"Well, in the night, the whole of the village about Harlem Bridge—I mean King's Bridge—was roused by firing of guns and pistols, and what not—and shoutin'. And they found on goin' into the tavern, old Adam Lee dead, with his head cut off, and the privateer captain dead, holdin' the old man's head by the hair—showin' he'd cut it off."

"This is horrible and strange! Did you see it, Seth Cutts?"

"Not I! I got up, but I don't like to be whar ther's shootin' goin' on; so I let my old woman, who don't fear the devil, go in her nightcap. And she told me all about it."

"It's true," said the other man, seeing that Ralph looked incredulous since the authority was given to him. "I went myself, and see Master Adam alyin' on his back, dead, with a hole clean through his breast; and the privateer captain, dead, with a dagger wound in his neck. The crowner was sittin' on 'em—and gave his verdict—'Died o' killin' one another, with malice perperse—both guilty.'"

Ralph slightly smiled, but the gravity of the deed deeply impressed him.

"If this is so—tell me what became of his daughter!"

"Wall, some said her brother had carried her off to keep the privateer from catching her; for they said the privateer captain was killed a tryin' to get Rose Lee out of the house: and old Adam died a defendin' her; and Robert Lee then carried her off to a place o' safety."

"This is some relief to your dreadful news. But I must go and see for myself."

"There was a set o' fellows led by Mark Manning," called out the younger fisherman, as Ralph spread his sail and flew away from them, "what took boat, and chased the privateer boat: to pay 'em for killing Adam Lee, and trying to run off with Rose. I see 'em start, all armed, just at day-break, in Adam Lee's boat he calls Golden Feather."

These last words were shouted at the top of his voice by the fisherman, who, the reader will see, had no exact information about the events which had transpired.

"That Adam Lee is murdered there can be no question," said Ralph, as he cast water upon his sail, to make it hold more wind by

swelling the threads. "Oh, blow harder, breezes! I feel as if I could fly, till I knew certainly what had become of Rose. Her brother taken her off to save her! I cannot understand it! But I shall soon know all! There comes a row-boat down; it contains three persons. They are strangers, and dress like the island men. They may know something—for it is now three miles from home, and I am all impatience to hear the truth. Boat ahoy!" he called, as he kept away to speak her.

"Ay, ay!"

"Are you from as high up as King's Bridge?"

"Yes!"

"Has a murder been done there?"

"Yes, two," answered one of the men who was steering. "The inn-keeper and a pirate."

"A pirate? You mean a privateersman!"

"So he passed for one. But it turns out he is a pirate! His boat was chased by a boat's crew, and nearly taken, when the schooner opened on the King's Bridge boat with grape, and took her own boat aboard, hoisted the black flag, and went hand over fist down the river, before a seven-knot breeze, and got to sea, although the battery opened on her."

"Can this be all true?"

"Yes, sir. I am a revenue officer, and have been up to the inn to see about it—to satisfy myself. This pirate captain had the boldness of Lucifer, to come into the Hudson under a privateer's flag, and come ashore, and carouse at a public inn. There is a story he came after a young girl—the sister of his lieutenant, who had sold her to his captain for gold, and was then and there to deliver up to the pirate leader, who, however, was killed by her father."

Before Ralph could hear more, the two boats were parted: as each kept moving its own way; so that he could hear no more. He gave utterance to a deep groan, and covered his face with his hands.

"Worse and worse—worse and worse. What can be the true account? Yet, O merciful Heaven! this last looks most likely—dreadful as it is. It is in keeping with the rumored character of Robert Lee. Yet, could he be so completely a devil as for such an idea to seize him, as to bargain his sister away to a pirate chief. Rumor said he had been a buccaneer. It is possible this may be true. It accounts for the visit of the schooner; for the landing of the crew at the Red Oak—where I myself heard them singing and carousing, supposing them American privateersmen. Doubtless they were waiting for night, and silence, to receive Rose from the hands of her diabolical brother, and convey her to the vessel. Doubtless her father died defending her, and slew the captain. But where is Rose? The fishermen said that Robert Lee had taken her to a place of safety. Oh fly, my boat! Blow winds! My heart and head will burst, with the oppression of this news."

He seized his oars and rowed with all his energy, aided by the wind, which was a five-knot breeze. He soon came in sight of the two oaks which grew by the shore, at the foot of his mother's humble home.

"I shall soon be there!" he cried, and renewing his exertions, in five minutes more he touched the bank; and bounding up the path to the door, leaving his boat to the tides. The sun was just setting—being not quite half an hour high.

"Mother—O my mother!" he cried, as he threw the door open and beheld her seated by the window, pale, and with traces of tears on her still beautiful face; for age does not destroy, but only alters the aspect of beauty. "Where is Rose? Is all this true I hear?"

"Ralph! Joy—joy! You are come, my son!" was her only reply, as she threw herself into his arms. "You've heard it, then?"

"I have heard—I know not what. Is Rose safe? Tell me that, mother, and then I can listen to all else with patience."

"I hope so—oh, I hope so! Sit down, Ralph. You are wild with agitation."

"Dear mother, do not talk of my looks. I hear Adam Lee has been killed by a pirate. Is it true?"

"Yes; and he killed the pirate."

"He was a pirate, then?"

"Oh, yes! You do not know what times we have passed through—"

"Rose—what of her? Where is Rosalie? Do not let me go mad, by this delay!"

"Rose was carried away by her brother—"

"By her brother Robert?"

"Yes."

"I heard so! Where is he? I was in hopes he had brought her here."

"She fled here, but—"

"From whom?"

"Her brother and the pirates."

"Mother—mother, see, I sit down! I am ready to listen to all—all! I will be calm. This broken intelligence only tortures me. Go on; tell me all."

"Rose, I suppose, frightened by the murders, fled here. I was asleep. It was at least two hours after you left—half way between midnight and day. I was awakened by a fearful shriek; I started to my feet, for I knew Rose's voice. (Ralph pressed his temples hard, and compressed his lips, to command himself.) I heard voices shouting, and then a wild cry and a plunge. I looked out and saw Rose struggling in the river. Near was a negro drowning, with horrible out-cries. A boat full of men was coming down stream. Rose then called to me from the water, into which she had leaped—or been thrown by her pursuers—to 'save her from Robert Lee.'"

At these words of his mother's narrative, Ralph leaped to his feet with a great cry, as if it came from his heart, while his eyes flashed the fires of vengeance. He was about to speak; but unable to trust his voice, or control it, he simply made a gesture to his mother to go on.

"I rushed out to do what I could when the boat came close to her. She sunk, at once, as if resolved to die, but was seized and taken on board—"

Ralph groaned with anguish that shook his frame, and caused the floor of the room to vibrate.

"You are ill, dear—"

"On—go—on!"

"I saw them take her out of the water; and then I heard Robert Lee call from the shore, close by the gate here, for them to pull in, and take him on board."

"They—d—did—so?" gasped Ralph.

"Yes! They then, by his order, pulled up stream. I was afraid to be seen, lest he would put me to death—for I could see, through the branches, his face, with the moon on it, and it was fearful to see, for the wickedness in it! But he was no sooner in the boat than I fled up the path to the bridge, and gave the alarm. Already some people were abroad, having heard her shrieks, and, I believe, some firing; and soon the whole neighborhood about the bridge was out to know what was the matter! The pirate boat, with Robert Lee in it, passed up under the bridge and out of sight before the whole truth was known. Then Mark Manning, Henry Ballard, and others, finding Rose was carried off against her will by her brother, got up a party to pursue it, and recover her."

"Noble friends! Brave fellows! I shall remember this."

"They went to the inn to borrow Adam Lee's boat, when his dead body was found, also the foreign captain's, in the cellar. Then the whole people got together, as you may believe. Mark and his party armed and gave chase, and—"

At this moment the door opened, and Mark and Henry Ballard stood before Ralph.

"What! He is here!" they both cried.

"We came down to see if he had come!" This was addressed to the mother, who was facing the door, to which Ralph had his back. He turned, and cried, as he caught their hands, his eyes running over with great tears:

"I know all—all! Thanks, thanks, my brave friends! I have only one question—'Did you—rescue—her?'"

"We did our best," began Mark.

"I believe it! I know you did! Did he—her brother—carry her to sea?"

"Yes, he did," answered Mark, his own eyes answering the emotion of his friend's.

"Oh, my heart—my poor heart! It will break!" he moaned, and sunk almost insensible into the chair, from which he had risen.

His mother knelt by his side, and rubbed his temples; while the two young men, unable to administer a word of consolation, or to offer hope, where there was no hope, stood each holding one of his hands, and fairly weeping, like brothers, at his heavy sorrows.

"Don't take it so to heart, my son!" said his mother. "It is not as if she were carried off by the pirate captain himself!"

"And as he is dead," said Henry Ballard, "there is no danger of his giving his sister to another."

"I fear everything evil for her in his power. A brother! He is rather a demon!" cried Ralph. And rising to his feet, almost at a leap, he exclaimed:

"It won't do for me to stay here! I must act! I must pursue him!"

"Oh, my son! you can do nothing! You have no vessel! Do not think of leaving me, and you just home again."

"I must not stay here, and Rose in peril, and unhappy, as she must be. She would never have cried out: 'Save me from Robert Lee,' if she had not mortal fear of being in his power."

"A vessel!" exclaimed Mark. "You can have a vessel to pursue at any moment you say so!"

"Speak quickly! How?"

"Captain Perry is in the city! He knows all about the carrying off of Rose—for we stopped at the city, when we could pursue the schooner no further. He became deeply interested, when we told him you were betrothed to her. He said to an officer present that he would, as soon as you came, send you with an order to Newport, where a United States vessel lay, which he would order to sea, if you desired it, and let you go in her."

"He is very kind; but it will be too late, I fear."

"He made me promise to bring you to see him as soon as you came home."

"Did you promise?"

"I did."

"Then I will go with you. Farewell, dear mother! I wish to see Captain Perry. His word is a law to me! I will soon return. I wish to learn all I can in the city about the vessel."

It was with painful reluctance his mother parted with him so soon again; but, holding out the hopes of soon seeing her, he kissed her with respectful, filial affection, and went away with his two friends.

They walked up to the bridge; and, on the way, they related all the particulars of the pursuit of the pirate-boat to Ralph. He listened with the deepest attention; and when they told him how Robert Lee, in order to prevent being fired upon, exposed his sister to the bullets, as a shield for his own person, his indignation burst in the bitterest denunciations.

It was dark when they reached the inn. In one room only was there a light, which revealed—extended upon a table—the corpse of Adam Lee, by which watched two men. The pirate's body had been buried that day by the coroner, in the corner of an open field, where, it was said, two smugglers had been hanged and buried eighty years before—a desolate and "haunted spot."

Ralph went into the room recently occupied by Rose, and gazed sadly upon her toilet-table, and into the mirror, which had so often reflected her beautiful face; and there inwardly vowed, that he would never cease the search for her over the world, so long as life remained in him.

Going thence to the house of Mark Manning, the three mounted there on horseback, and rode rapidly in the direction of the city.

When, about eight o'clock in the evening, they entered Broadway from the Bloomingdale road, they were struck with the splendor of the scene that burst upon them. The name of "PERRY" was emblazoned in letters of fire, and spanned the street; while arches, bearing the names of "Barclay," "Yarnell," "Brooks," and other heroes of the battles of the Lakes, were passed in succession by the three riders. The houses on each side were illuminated, and flags were strung across the street, or floated from the roofs.

On arriving at the intersection of Bleecker street with Broadway, a great arch bore the name of Washington, in stars of light; and, farther on, a transparency represented Perry and his vessels engaged in the fight; and, under the form of one figure, was inscribed: "Lieutenant Ralph Turner!"

"See, Ralph! You are not forgotten!" cried his young companions, pointing it out to him.

"Yes; my country does me too much honor! But, Harry—Mark, what is all this to me now, with what I suffer!"

"Cheer up! See! They recognize you! Hark! 'Three cheers for Ralph Turner!' they give."

Ralph raised his cap and bowed, and said: "Let us ride rapidly on! My heart is not in this."

The streets were thronged with people, and they had to turn aside, to make any progress, into another street. Here they dashed onward; and, by-and-by, re-entered Broadway, and reached the Park, where salutes were firing in honor of "the hero," who was just returning from a grand procession through the city, to prepare for the military ball to be given to him.

By skillful winding in and out, our party reached the quarters of the commodore, or captain, as he was then known; and learning that he had just returned to his room, Ralph hesitated to inform him of his presence.

"He wished to see you without delay," said Mark.

"Yes; there should be no delay," answered Ralph.

And, alighting, he entered the house, and sent his name to his commander by a bright-looking midshipman, whom he knew, and who was attached to his suite. It was at once carried to him; and the next moment the handsome little naval officer returned, and said that the captain wished to see him.

CHAPTER XIII.

Ralph found "the hero of Lake Erie" in his private room, in the act of throwing off his gold-embroidered coat and laying aside his sword, in order to take some repose before the ball should begin in the City Hall, two hours later.

The moment he saw Ralph, he took him by the hand and said, with a smile of pleasure, which was saddened by the manifest sympathy of his voice:

"I am glad you are come. I am sorry for your misfortune, my dear boy. Cheer up! It may come out all right yet, since it is her brother who has taken her off. A bold scoundrel! and to get to sea without anything beyond a shot or two in her timbers and canvas! If there had been an armed vessel in port I would have sent her in chase. But everything was tied up, just as we wanted it."

"You are very kind to have thought of it," said Ralph.

"Not at all. But it is not yet too late to give chase."

"How, sir? What can I do?"

"There is a privateer riding at anchor here—a new, staunch, and well-built craft. I went on board of her this afternoon, wholly with an eye to you. She can be ready for sea in twelve hours, if you will take command of her."

"I, sir?" cried Ralph, with wonder and joy.

"Yes, you! I have named you to her owners. They say, if you will accept the command, you shall have it. If you do, you can get any number of men; for your name alone will be a host to ship on! Do you hesitate? You can then give chase to the schooner, which I have reason to believe has sailed for England."

Captain Perry then repeated the conversation between himself and the Canadian.

"But, sir, as a privateer, I must cruise for the interests of the owners. How can I have two objects in view?"

"I will tell you. After seeing the merchants, to-day, who are getting her for sea, I learned that they intended her especially to cruise in the English seas, there are so many on the southern coast and in mid-ocean. The captain they were to have had was a stockholder with them, and twenty of the men he shipped; but they are willing, as you are a young man, and have not capital, to pay you wages, and such crew as you ship liberal monthly pay. I told them that you would serve them as faithfully as if you were interested in the profits."

"I will take command of the vessel, sir, if they will permit me to use my own discretion where to cruise first."

"That is, if they will allow you to begin by giving chase to this pirate."

"Yes, sir. That is all that is on my mind."

"I have no doubt they will; for I told them your story, and that you would want some liberty of choice."

"If they will do so, I can ship sixteen of the best young men to be found, who will ask no wages if we do not take the Scorpion."

"Good! admirable! Are they the brave fellows whom that gallant youth, Manning, led in pursuit of the boat?"

"Yes, sir."

"That will do. I shall see the merchants, soon. They form part of the Committee of Escort. As soon as they arrive, I will speak to them aside, so that no time be lost."

Ralph thanked him, and was about to leave, when he said:

"Remain here. I wish to present you to them."

"I have friends in the street."

"Be here, then, in an hour."

Our hero took leave of the brave and generous captain, and rejoined Mark, to whom and Harry he made known what had transpired at the interview. They were both elated at the prospect of his taking the vessel, and at once volunteered to go with him if he should accept the command of the privateer.

"You have an hour, Ralph," said Harry, "let us walk up Broadway and look at the illuminations."

"I prefer pacing the Battery, here, with my own thoughts, my friend."

"No, no," said Mark; "we can't allow it. You can do no good by taking to heart so heavy her loss. Be cheerful. That is half the battle."

Ralph suffered himself to be persuaded, and walked with them up the street, which was thronged with people enjoying the sight of the dazzling arches and the illuminated windows. Broadway was then lined with the residences of the wealthy citizens, from the Battery to the Park; and each of these vied with the other in the splendor of the brilliant display of parti-colored lights.

About the tower of Trinity Church lights were suspended, lending to it a magnificent appearance. The front windows of Grace Church, just below it, were a blaze of lamps.

The City Hotel seemed on fire, so splendidly was every window lighted up. They walked on, and Ralph became interested. At length, they reached St. Paul's, the superb spire of which was glittering with the star-like forms of fire. The Park was in a blaze with rockets, while at intervals the deep voice of artillery mingled with and rose above the shouts of men.

Suddenly, there was a cry of "fire!" The word was caught up with startling loudness, vehemently passed from tongue to tongue! A rocket had fallen upon the cupalo of the spire of the Beekman-street Church, opposite the Park, and was alight; and the blaze momentarily increasing as it seized upon the shingles. At the sight, a great cry like despair and terror rose upon the air! The place was a hundred and twenty feet in the air, beyond the reach of ladder or the fire-engines of that day. There was a wild rushing to and fro, and confused cries; but nothing was done. Ralph no sooner beheld the little blaze, not bigger than his hand, far up in the sky, as it were, than his features lighted up with resolution.

"The church will be destroyed! I will try to save it!"

He ran forward, separating the crowd right and left, and coming to the post of the lofty steeple, he caught a leathern fire-bucket of water from a half-crazed person, and passing his left arm through the handle to the shoulder, he began to climb the lightning-rod, hand over hand, amid the cheers of the multitude. What would have been impossible to a landsman, was practical for a seaman who had courage and strength. Twenty, thirty, fifty feet—up he went! The voices ceased! Seventy feet! A hushed silence prevailed, and every eye of the ten thousand spectators was upon him. Ninety feet was achieved, and he reached the architecture of the first cupalo. He climbed over it, and again resumed his ascent. The flame, forty feet still above him, was fanned by the wind, and momentarily enlarged. He stayed not an instant to gaze downward or look upward, but continued to mount with steady courage.

"He can never get over that frieze!" cried one.

"He will give out before he gets ten feet higher!"

"He can never reach it!"

"The spire is too smooth for him to get footing!"

"If he is not up there soon, it will be too late!"

"See, the blaze is a yard high!"

"Hear it crackle!"

"How it shoots into the air?"

"He has spilled half the water over him in

climbing. He'll have none, when he gets there, to put it out with!"

Such were the words uttered by the excited crowd. Then came cries of cheer.

"Bravo!"

"Courage!"

"A few more feet and you'll have it!"

"Don't give in!"

"Hold hard! You are most there!"

"Will he reach it, Mark?" said Harry, as he stood by his friend, watching with their hearts in their mouths.

"Yes! He knows not what fail is! See, he will be up in a moment. The flames are already curling close above his head!"

Suddenly a vast, great, mighty outburst of human voices proclaimed the victory! Ralph had reached the very coping on which the flames burned, and standing, clinging to the lightning-rod by which he had ascended, he carefully poured the water from his bucket with the other over the blazing shingles, so that not a drop should be lost! By degrees the flame sunk, and then, after a fitful flashing, which revealed the hero's calm, brave face to all below, it was extinguished. And there stood the conqueror in mid air, clearly visible by the light of the illumination in the park and streets.

Such a shout of applause as burst upon the air New York has not since heard, even with her half million of inhabitants. Ralph felt the very steeple vibrate with the concussion. Lingering a moment to assure himself that no covert sparks remained, he slung his bucket upon his shoulder, and proceeded to descend as he went up. There was a deep, expectant silence until he had got near the ground, when a rush was made toward him; but as he touched the earth, he found himself between Harry and Mark, who, at his request, hurried him off by the most accessible way to avoid the pressure of the excited people. And passing down Spruce street, they made a detour by William street and Maiden Lane back to Broadway.

At the expiration of the time, Ralph returned, and with Mark and Harry in company, appeared before Captain Perry. He informed Ralph that the merchants were content that he should do his best to capture the Scorpion, especially as he promised that neither he nor his friends would claim any prize-money if she were taken. His commission was that very night made out, and by twelve o'clock the next day, through the diligence of Mark and Harry, not only the other young men of "the woosers of Golden Feather" were volunteers to go with Ralph, but he could not receive one-third of the brave seamen who pressed forward to ship with him—such was the influence of his reputation for courage and seamanship.

Thus, what was intended to be a privateer, partook of the character, under the new captain, Ralph Turner, also of an armed merchantman—that is, so far as shipping the residue of her men was concerned. She was a long and handsome craft, rigged as a brig forward and as a schooner aft, with an enormous spread of canvas. Her tonnage was one hundred and ninety-six; she was painted black, with a gilt belt running round her waist fore and aft; her spars were painted bright vermilion, and also the interior of her bulwarks. She carried mounted only six guns, but they were long eighteen-pounders, and amidships was a ponderous sixty-four not mounted, but with every appliance for setting upon a pivot between the masts.

At noon the day following the flight of the buccaneer to sea—the ship-stores being all on board—Ralph, having gone on board with all his crew, eighty-six in all, and taken leave of Captain Perry (who gave him some instructions as to his movements when he should get outside), and also of his mother, who came down to bid him adieu, and pray for his success, he gave the orders "to up anchor, and put to sea!"

Amid the cheers of thousands on the shore and shipping, "The Golden Feather"—for this was the name which, by permission of the owners, Ralph conferred upon his beautiful vessel—glided from her anchorage, and with the wind nearly dead south, began to beat out of the harbor. Her first tack brought her close to the head of Staten Island, so close she lay to the wind, sliding along at eight knots with ease, with the wind six and a half points free. In her next starboard tack she fetched far below the quarantine

ground; and in two hours after weighing anchor, she was bounding like a loosed bird over the dark-blue sea—yielding in graceful undulations to the long ocean roll, over which she flew with winged speed.

We will now follow the escaped buccaneer, and availing ourselves of the privilege which belongs to an author—of penetrating all places—descend into the cabin at the time when Robert Lee carried her there, after taking her from the barge on the river. Having locked her in, he re-ascended to the deck to give orders, as the command now devolved upon him. The chest of treasure he had also seen taken out of the boat and placed in his main cabin.

The vessel was constructed with four cabins, two on each side of the companion-way for the officers, and two aft—one opening through into the other, and sternmost. The forward of these two cabins, which took up the whole breadth of beam, was the captain's, and the inner one was reserved for treasure and arms, and for passengers the buccaneer chief took a fancy to save from death. It was now elegantly fitted up, and had the appearance of a luxurious boudoir. In the main or captain's cabin were two carronades with closed ports, and one in each of the side-cabins; but the after-cabin had no gun in it. The only entrance was through the captain's room. In the stern were two square windows, or dead lights, which were strongly barred with iron. There were a few pictures hanging up, books on the transom, which was decorated as an ottoman, and mirrors and toilet articles.

When Rose Lee found herself left alone, she raised her pale face, and gazed about her with looks half collected, and sensibilities scarcely returned—for the reader will remember that for a time in the barge she lay insensible in the arms of Robert Lee. Her long hair still hung wet and disheveled over her shapely shoulders, and her dress was heavy with water. No longer beneath her arm was the small bundle she had taken from her room in the inn, and to which she had instinctively clung through all. The Jockey, ring, and package of papers were safe in her bosom.

With a fearful, startled gaze she looked about her, as if she expected to see revealed the form of some comrade in crime of her dreaded brother.

"Oh, why am I brought to this vessel? What madness has come upon Robert? Does he seek to destroy me? What have I done? What will be my fate? Hark! the vessel is sailing away with me. I will shriek for help. Oh, that Mark Manning and his brave band could have reached me! Yet I should have died by Robert's hand! He swore it, that if they captured him, I should die on the instant! Yet at what price have I purchased life—I know not! This is a pirate vessel! It is all too true that my brother was a pirate—he seems chief, too! This gives a hope of safety from insult from these dreadful men! Oh, my sad, sad fate! And poor Ralph! When he comes to hear it—if he had been at his mother's, I should have been safe! It is punishment to him and me, because he was guiding a spy out of the country. It may be so—it may be so! and I shun this fate, while Arthur Percy by my means is free! I will not murmur, then. I will try and conciliate Robert. He can not mean to injure me! What scenes have I passed through! My pulse trembles and my heart beats by starts! Would that I dare repose, for I am so weary—wearily! I am sick at heart!"

Thus soliloquizing, the unhappy girl rested her face in her hand, and insensibly sunk down into a disturbed and dreamful slumber.

In the meanwhile, Robert Lee was on deck, occupied in getting his vessel safely out of the river. He could see the boats pulling to the city, and well knew it was to give the alarm. But, being a thorough sailor, and cool and active in danger, he managed his vessel so skilfully, that he took every advantage of wind and current; and, as we have seen, ran the gauntlet past the battery and the fort.

As he passed near the privateer, which was anchored off Battery Marsh street, he said to his first officer—a tall, mustached Greek, who spoke English, and called himself Captain Marco—who had been at the Inn:

"If that craft were ready for sea, and should give chase, I should stand a poor chance.

See her cut-water, and what length to her breadth of beam. She will sail like a swallow!"

"I'm mush bleezed he non ready!" growled the man, with a Spanish shrug of his left shoulder—and indeed he looked more like a Castilian than a Grecian. "Wish vay you goin steer af we get zafe out to de ocean?"

"East! I'm bound for England."

"Zo de capitan say when we kom. You tak' de ladiash, too!"

"Don't you speak of her again, Captain Marco. She is my sister!"

"Tios! I know! I know! But look!"

The battery of guns on the island have opened upon them; and Robert Lee, commanding all but the men necessary to steer and work the vessel to lie flat on their faces, gave all his thoughts to getting out safely to sea. When, at length, he had left the island a league astern, he called the officers about him, and the crew aft, and made them this brief address:

"MY MEN: I am now your captain! You know me. I have been your first lieutenant. You know I keep my word. If a man disobeys my orders, I will put him in irons—if a man is impudent, I will shoot him! I mean to be captain of this vessel. These are my officers. They each have risen a grade by my advancement. You will obey them. As for your old captain, he is dead! He was killed—and some here saw him dead in the inn—while trying to get treasure from my father. I have it. It is mine! I keep it for my sister. She is on board with me. You will respect her. The first prize we take, I will make a present to you, without touching a stiver, in honor of my taking the command!"

"Three cheers for Captain Lee!" called out one of the crew, which was given with oaths and yells; for no sailors but the Anglo-Saxon knew how to "huzza!"

Captain Lee then dividing the crew into larboard and starboard watch; and giving the latter in command of the dark Greek, he remained on deck until the Scorpion passed the Narrows, and had the open sea before her. He then returned to the cabin.

Here was a congregation of men, now, on board this vessel, united only by the common bond of crime and avarice, and held in union by fear—for no cowards are to be met with equal to desperadoes. Pirates are seldom brave! Here was a young man of three-and-twenty, who, solely by the strength of his will and the resolute devil in him, not only committed himself fearlessly to the company of this band of outlaws, but controlled them. His self-reliance had upon them the effect of destroying their own; and while he had not the friendship of one of them, he was as quiet and assured among them as if they were one and all ready to lay down life for him.

But bandits and buccaneers must have leaders; and it is not the man they most like, but the one who is the most successful in captures, and who fears not them while they fear him, whom they will follow. Hence, even in a pirate vessel, there is discipline, and the routine of system and order.

CHAPTER XIV.

The pirate-schooner's watch-bell forward was striking eight bells, or the hour of noon, when Robert Lee descended into his cabin. For a moment, he stood and looked about him, as if surveying, with secret pride, the place, now his, so recently occupied by the pirate chief.

There was his storm-jacket, hanging where he had left it when he last put it off; and by it, his rough-weather tarpaulin. Opposite, were his swords and cutlasses, a harquebuss, and several braces of pistols in becketts. There was, also, his couch, his desk, and Panama chair.

"So, I am lord and master here now," said Robert Lee, half aloud; "and I have come to the command, with all the silver in my hands, thanks to my good blow given him in the cellar! Here I am master, with all the sea before me—master, too, of the fairest form that ever graced a throne! Beautiful Rose! I value your possession more than vessel or treasure. This desk is also mine, with its contents, which its master used to guard so jealously from all eyes. Doubtless, he expected to return and take it away; but Death has stopped all that. Now, I will make my toilet, and go in and see my fair prisoner."

As he spoke, he prepared to appear to better advantage than the roughness of the chase in the boats had left him; as he did so, he continued:

"It was a marvel I got past the forts as we did. But we were sailing too fast for them to take good aim. If that shot which buried itself in the waist had gone a little farther aft, it would have passed through the cabin, and, perhaps, robbed me of all I have dared so much for—the lovely Rosalie Lee! How will she receive me? Shall I let her know at once I am not her brother? No; I will be governed by circumstances. Whatever be the issue, she is completely in my power." He now approached the inner-door, and was turning the key, when a "please, massa," caused him to turn round. It was the old African steward who had served the former captain, who was bowing, with his hand on his breast, with deference.

"Well, fellow?"

"Shall old Wallah wait on new capitan—same on ol' capitan?"

"Yes. You will do for me as you have done for him."

"What'll young new capitan hab for him dinner?"

"The best you can get."

"Dar no wegetable—no fresh meat—shick-en—we come to sea so quickum!"

"Get, then, what you can. Go!"

The gray-haired steward, who looked like a humane, honest fellow—a rare bird in a pirate vessel—then retired; while Robert Lee, muttering: "I shall have to put in somewhere for vegetables, or the men will all have the scurvy"—unlocked the inner state-room, and softly entered.

He saw his captive asleep, as we left her, with her head in her hand. He stood gazing upon her in silence. Was there in his face pity?—was there sorrow in his heart for her whom, for years, he had looked upon as a sister, and who still regarded him as her brother? No. Cold and hard were his eyes, as he regarded her pale and interesting face. She sobbed, as it were, as she slept. Suddenly she started, as if feeling the malevolence of his eye, and murmured: "Save me, Ralph! Oh, sa—s—v—." And the sentence died away again in troubled sleep.

"Accursed!" he cried, through his shut teeth. "He is all that will be in my way, I see! She calls on him! Save her? Ha, ha! He is very little likely to help her now. Let her call even waking; and I will laugh at her, if she defies me. But if she is—"

"Oh, mother! save me from Robert Lee!" she shrieked, and started to her feet with wild regards.

When she beheld him, dark and frowning before her, she cried, with anguish:

"Oh, it is all, all real! I hoped to find it a dreadful dream. O Robert, Robert! where am I? Save me? Restore me? Whither are you taking me?" she implored, as she saw through the stern-windows that the sea was all rolling about the vessel, and the land only visible afar off.

"To happiness, Rose! Nay, do not fly from me. Am I not your brother? Do you think I would harm you?"

"I—I—don't—know," she gasped, like a terrified child, from the farther corner of the state-room, where she shrunk from him. "I am—almost—beside myself! Don't approach me, or—I—shall—"

"Shall what, dearest?" he said, ironically, yet not moving. For he verily feared she was losing her reason, as, with lips parted, her eyes fixed and bright with terror, and her long hair held about her form, with both hands, she watched him.

"I—know—not! Die, if I could!"

"That would be very silly, Rose. You are to live and make me happy. You know I love you."

"Love! What is love? Love! You love me!"

This sentence was uttered interruptedly and brokenly, as if the speaker were half-distracted, and could not collect her thoughts.

"Yes, Rose, I love you," he said, in a softer tone; for he saw that it would not take much to make her go mad, in her present state of fear and weakness of body.

Suddenly she advanced a step, and said, with wild fervor:

"Robert Lee, what do you want with me? Why have you done this? My father slain, perhaps by thy hand!"

"It is false! The captain slew him, and I flew the captain for the deed!"

"Why have you made me a prisoner, and are taking me to sea?"

"I have my reasons."

"It will never prevent me, hear thou, O wickedest and cruelest brother maiden ever had, from loving Ralph Turner! I did not swear I would not love! Do with me as you will, I can never cease to love him; and if you have taken me away in this terrible ship, of which I see, with horror, you are the terrible master, hoping I shall forget him, you are deceived!"

"You will make me angry, girl."

"So I wish to do, that you may, in a moment of wrath, strike me dead! Oh! death is better than life—the life I see before me, as your slave, not your sister—for sister never was so entreated!"

"So, I see your spirit is roused. A moment ago I thought you were getting lunatic; but I need have had no such fears; there is fire enough in you to blow up a gun-ship."

"Robert, I ask you where you are taking me?"

"On a pleasure-excursion in my yacht. See how finely I have had your state-room adorned, all by my orders, for you, expecting to take you on board."

"Then this outrage was planned beforehand?"

"Without question. In order to capture you, this vessel came in from sea three days ago, and anchored in the North river."

"And why? What was all this done for? Why did you wish to tear me from my home?"

"To give you another in this vessel—in these arms."

"What means this strange language? Robert Lee!" she cried, trembling, she knew not with what undefined horror and suspicions.

"It means that I love you to madness, Rose!" he cried, flying toward her, catching her hands, kissing them passionately, and kneeling at her feet.

"Release me, sir! Do you know what you do?" she cried, with wonderful dignity and stern rebuke, while her eyes regarded him, as if she believed that much wickedness had made him mad. "You forget I am your sister—that this love is accursed by God and man!"

"What care I for God or man, or the curse of either? I do what I list; I recognize no accountability to any higher tribunal than my own will and pleasure!"

He still held her two hands, and still knelt at her feet. With an out-cry of despair and mortal agony, she tore herself from him, and fled to the door. He had taken the precaution to lock it on the inside and remove the key. He rose to his feet and laughed at the result of her effort.

"It is of no use, Rose, to try to escape from my love. To do it, you must escape from the body."

"I cannot, I know not, how to understand you. If you are insane, Heaven have mercy on my helplessness! If not, then I must cast myself on your mercy! You know not that there is a gulf between us as wide as heaven and earth are Sundered, and that you may not cross it with one thought beyond a brother's pure and holy love! Oh, mercy! that I should have to plead with a brother thus!"

"The farce has gone far enough, Golden Feather," he said, with a smile—if a smiling expression, combining in it triumph, and malice, and love, could thus be termed; "I will explain to you the mystery of my passion for you, since it is you harp only on the chord that you are my sister."

"And would to Heaven I were not!" she cried, with angry spirit. "I loathe the relationship with one so base and devilish as thou art!"

"Thy wish is granted. Thou hast the secret of all I have done!"

"What? How? What is hidden under your words, which looks darkly out of your eyes? Robert Lee, what do you mean by saying my wish is granted? No power can sever the bond of Nature between me and thee."

"No, not were we brother and sister!"

"Were we?" she ejaculated, with increasing wonder.

"Yes, were we; but I will not amuse myself with you, poor gold-fish, any longer, but haul you into the bank. We are not brother and sister!"

"THOU LIEST!"

He started, with an exclamation of surprise, at this quick, direct, indignant response, which was wholly unlooked for.

"I lie!" he laughed, sneeringly. "By the mass! as they swear on the Main, your beauty returns with the most brilliant hues, when your temper is up in this way, and your eyes sparkle with the splendor of old. I never before believed you were so charming, Rose. I shall begin to think that women, like game, require a little seasoning of the pepper and mustard of anger to be palatable. Nevertheless, what I said is true."

"You but assert it as a last resort, O devil, most wicked!"

"I swear it to you, Rose! We are not related any more than I and my lieutenant Marcos are kith and kin."

"I could almost say, thank God! but for—*for*—. Yet, sir, have you proof of this? Who are you, if not my brother?"

"The question is, who are *you*? I am the son of Adam Lee; but you are not his daughter!"

"Then has the instinct of my heart been a true one," she exclaimed, in a whisper, as if soliloquizing; but he overheard her.

"So you have had suspicion?"

"I know not. What is this news, which I know not whether to call good or evil? But Heaven turn it to good, if it be true! Hast thou only mocked me?"

"No. You are not my sister."

"Amen! So be it. Let what may come," she said, folding her crossed hands upon her bosom, "I hope it is true."

"True enough for me, Rose. Listen. You shall hear."

"Oh, lie not to me!"

"I will show you proofs of all what I say."

"Go on."

"Sit down. You will be fatigued. I will not approach you."

She sunk upon the transom, and bent forward to hear, her face expressing neither hope nor yet doubt; but rather a patient expectation—a want of full confidence, yet ready to hear all. She looked also watchful and fearful. She felt all the helplessness of her situation, in the power of a man who, whether her brother or an alien, was equally her foe and terror.

"Last voyage, Rose, I met with a man (a pirate, if you will), who told me, while dying, that there was a chest of treasure hidden in my father's inn, under the hearth; that it had been taken from an English ship, which was captured at sea by a buccaneer vessel, of which my father was captain."

"Adam Lee?"

"Yes, Adam Lee. You see it runs in the blood, Rose."

She made no reply, save to clasp her hands closer and grow paler. She now remembered the chest she had seen in the cellar and seen in the boat.

"The dying buccaneer, whom I had befriended, not only told me where he had helped my father to conceal the chest, but that it contained plate and jewels to a large amount, which belonged to an English passenger, who was struck down and killed, I believe—at any rate, left for dead, and his daughter, a little girl of two years, was taken a fancy to by my father—who not only saved her from the general massacre of the ship's company, but adopted her. I see you listen!"

"And that child?"

"Is yourself! My father left the sea and came home, and opened the Red Oak Inn. This was seventeen years ago, about—and ever since you have believed yourself his daughter; I also, believed you were my sister, until three months ago, in the West Indies, when the man Cassin made known the facts to me. I hastened to return to New York by the first ship, leaving my captain in the Scorpion, in the West Indies. I, however, had told him why I wished to leave and come home, when he proposed to me to surrender the command of the vessel (the same we are now in) to me for one half the treasure. To this I agreed—having, as he knew, been anxious to get a command; and so we arranged to meet in New York on a certain day. I then came home, arriving, as you know, a month ago. You recollect how you flew into my arms! That embrace electrified me—for I knew it was more than a sister's kiss. From that moment I resolved to win you as a lover; so that when I should reveal to you that we

were not brother and sister, you would consent to be my wife!"

"Now—now, I see! *I know all!* The key to your conduct is at length given! What unfair, unmanly advantage, sir, did you, under the mask of a brother's love, seek to take of me?" she said, blushing with anger at the recollection how often he had treacherously profaned her lips and cheek at will, with guile in his heart. What modest female could have forgiven this?

"But was the tale true? Might it not all be an invention? Did he not seek to deceive her?" These were the thoughts which flashed through her mind, although she had heard something before, in part, in the cellar. He seemed to read her thoughts, and said:

"You need proof?"

"I do—yet I fear it!"

"Are you so desirous that I should be your brother?" he asked, maliciously.

"The proof!"

He unlocked the door, and leaving it open, so that he could see what he did, he unlocked the chest in the next room, and drew from it several pieces of silver, and exhibited them to her—not aware she had already seen the interior of the chest, and removed from it a locket, ring, and package of papers: as the reader will remember was the case.

"Do you see these? They are a part of what belonged to the general in the English ship. They ought to be yours, I dare say you will pronounce! So they shall be, when you are mine. It will be a fair exchange, Rose."

She shuddered, with looks of abhorrence.

"If you still doubt—"

"No—no! *I feel* I am not your sister—nor Adam Lee's daughter! It is enough! My instincts shrink from such blood-alliance. It is in some sense a relief! Ah! I overheard something of this. But, while it led me to suspect I was not his daughter, I knew not but I was still your sister. But, till now, I had forgotten all this, in my great alarm."

"What did you overhear?"

"What passed in the vault, and much of what Adam Lee, dying, revealed. But it made not, then, a clear impression upon my mind, so shocked at the scenes I witnessed. But now I recall it all! I am satisfied, not only that he is not my father, but that, more still, you, O fiend, are not my brother!"

"I am glad we are now come to an understanding," he said, closing the chest.

"Stay! What inscriptions are on that plate?"

"No name—only a coat-of-arms. I see you wish now to know who your father was. But this plate tells no tale until we can find in England what house carries this shield. Till then, you must be content with the honor of being the wife of Robert Lee, Commander of his Satanic Majesty's armed schooner, the Scorpion!"

As he said this, he returned to her state-room. She firmly confronted him—meeting his gaze with the full force of her own.

"Robert Lee, we do understand each other. I see that you are resolved to take advantage of my helplessness to coerce me to marry you!"

"I am delighted to see you come so directly to the point. It saves a good deal of box-hauling, and talking round the capstan. What do you say to it?"

"That I regard your conduct as base, beyond description—defying language to express it in suitable phrase. I refuse to become your wife. I can die; but I will not wed you! Death is in my power, if I am in yours!"

"I can only smile, dear Rose, at your tragic eloquence. Death is not in your power. There is not even a bodkin here, with which you can take your life: and I know you can't bite your own head off. I knew something of your character, and put all out of your way. Nor can you leap into the sea—for you see the stern lights are iron-bound. No, no! You are a sweet bird, all safely caged; and it would be an appropriate song for you to sing, with the starling, in the book you recollect you had, when you was a little girl."

"I can't get out—I can't get out."

But I will leave you to reflection. I see you are not in the mood for loving; but reflection and time will soon bring you round. I will give you till to-morrow evening at this time, to say whether you will be my wife. You

know me well, and that it is not safe to trifle with a man of my humor. Good-bye. My old African steward shall bring you your meals, and you shall not be intruded upon the next twenty-four hours. I shall then come to pay my suit to you—not as a brother, but as a lover. I hope you will find by that time it is for your interest to consent to marry me!"

"Marry a buccaneer? Marry the son of the man who slew my father? Marry the wretch who carries me off, and plays the tyrant?"

"Very nice speaking! Quite in the romantic vein, Rose. I overlook your abuse. I offer you honorable marriage. We will stop at Fayal, Western Islands, and be honorably united by a priest there, in one of the Catholic churches. If you are sensible and docile, and give me a favorable answer to-morrow night, I will give you the freedom of the ship, treat you as a queen—do all in my power to render the voyage agreeable to you. I will come into your presence only when invited, and act the gentleman in all points, till we reach Fayal—which will be in about fourteen or fifteen days. If you do not. But I make no threats! You know what will be best for you! Something is due to my mad love for you. You have no ties—an orphan—ignorant of your own name, family, or country! I offer you—"

"Enough! Leave me, Robert Lee!"

"Adieu, fair Rose. May the fates lead you to choose happiness with me, rather than—"

"Death without thee! Stay! I choose the latter *now*!"

He laughed, and without a word more, went out, and locked the door upon her.

An hour afterward, while she sat weeping heartily over her fate, it was opened by old Wallah, who brought, upon a silver salver, wine, fruit, cake, and other luxuries. At first she started with alarm at beholding him enter; but his kind and admiring tones, as if her beauty amazed him: "Will pretty mistress eat something, ol' Wallah bring?" and his honest face reassured her; and she accepted the refreshment, having fasted since the previous day.

CHAPTER XV.

The Scorpion kept on her course before a brisk breeze from the south-west, due east, after passing the Narrows. When Robert Lee returned to the deck, everything was drawing free and full, and the schooner was leaping along at nine knots, dashing the white foam from her bows, and leaving a long milk-like way, extending far astern. The land was quite visible as a faint blue cloud on the horizon; and, here and there, a small vessel could be seen running down the coast, or steering for the entrance to New York harbor. The sun shone brightly over the sea, the waters of which deepened their blueness, as they increased in depth.

"A spanking breeze, Captain Marcos," he said to the Greek lieutenant, who was pacing the deck with a Turkish pipe in his mouth, and a spyglass beneath his arm, which occasionally he leveled at some one of the sails in sight:

"Vera kood windo, capitano! Where you bound now?"

"For the Western Islands first."

"Ehg! That ish vere we rob te convent! It no goot go dare! Bad look steal from de priest."

"You have no conscience in such matters, I know, Marcos. I am going to cruise about England. I have business at Fayal on the way."

"Ehg! What you do for vegetable?"

"Board the first merchantman, and help ourselves."

"Vere well! Te men must have vegetables! Will you get as moosh gold cruisin' about Anglelant as af we went town to de Vest Indie again."

"More. I expect to find some on shore there!"

"Ah, dat intect. Dere more gol' and zilver on shores dan on de seas. Vera goot!"

Robert Lee now walked round the vessel, spoke to each of his officers affably, and said a few social words to the men; and then examined, with the gunner by his side, each of the carronades and the long "fifty-six" pivot gun. Having satisfied himself of their good condition, he then inspected all the small arms, pikes, cutlasses, and the ammunition.

He made himself thoroughly master of the condition of the vessel; and then had fifty of the men organized into squads, six to each gun, with a captain; and selected his boarding parties; in fact, placing the whole schooner on a "war-footing." The loss of nine of the men, who were drowned by the shot from the sloop's swivel, rendered changes in other ways necessary to perfect order and efficiency. For such a dark-looking, warlike craft, scouring the sea, was likely, at any moment, to be chased by a frigate, or attacked by a privateer. He also directed that the whole crew should be drilled at their posts twice in twenty-four hours—once in the daytime, and once by night. Thus prepared for every emergency, and fearing no danger from pursuit, Robert Lee retired to his state-room just as the sun was going down, like a great shield of burnished gold, into the bosom of the sea astern.

Rose, in her gorgeous state-chamber, sat by one of the windows in the stern, and gazed musingly and sadly westward upon the sunset scene on the sea. She had now been alone five hours; and had slept four, awaking refreshed, and with a calmness which enabled her to contemplate quietly and truly her situation. She took her place by the stern window, and gazed out upon the aqua-marine surface of the shining and rolling ocean, with a wonder and delight which, for the time, drew her thoughts from herself. The long, glittering swell of the emerald-tinted billows which followed the vessel, breaking in crests of silvery foam under her stern—their majestic voice, as they in unison lifted it up in their solemn tones—the graceful sea-gulls, with snowy breasts and dark-brown wings, wheeling in swift circles above the seething wake, their bright eyes watching the surface for any crumbs that might fall overboard—the distant white sails that seemed moving along on the outer arc of the ocean; and, above all, the descending sun lighting up ocean and clouds with indescribable glory, were, one and all, objects that interested her. As she now beheld the sun slowly dip his lower limb into the sea, and gradually descend, lingering a moment in the form of a golden bow before he went down out of sight altogether, and flinging a great scarf of golden glory along the surface of the sea toward her, she could scarcely suppress an exclamation of wondering admiration.

Grief is ever a temporary emotion! The more violent it is, the briefer is its existence. God has so wisely and mercifully constituted us, that time, and change, and outward circumstances, all contribute to soften it, lessen it, and divert it. When we behold the beloved wife bereft of her husband, and witness her shrieks of desolation and anguish, we should suppose she would never cease to weep for him. But day after day passes, and the fountain of her tears is gradually dried up; by-and-by, the face of mourning can smile again; the low voice of sorrow recovers its elasticity of tone, the slow step of grief its lightness, and Time weaves a tender veil of memory over the past, and invites the late mourner to interest herself once more in the present! All this proceeds from the wisdom and goodness of our Creator, who knows "what is in man," and that continual sorrow would destroy him. So, the mother recovers from the death of her first-born, the brother ceases to mourn the loss of a sister, the friend of a friend; and the smiles of this year replace the tears of last year. So, the prisoner, when first cast into his dungeon, now casts himself upon the stone floor in despair, now springs to his feet, and extends his manacled hands toward Heaven in anguish unspeakable. He mourns, he weeps, he agonizes, he beats his brow, and raves with mental wretchedness at his fate; but the next day he is calmer; the third day, more passive, and, ere long, tears and groans give way to silent submission to a fate which he feels is without remedy.

Thus it was with Rose! The wild excitement of her situation had exhausted itself; her anger had ended in bitterness of heart—her tears could flow no longer! She could only wait and trust in Heaven, and bear with submission her fate, until it should become necessary to call upon death to save her from a union—to her more dreadful than death.

She sat, therefore, gazing out upon the sea with a calm, fixed sadness settled upon her lovely face. She was reflecting upon the past, and upon the wonderful revelation respecting herself.

"Not his sister!—not Adam Lee's daughter!" she suddenly said, in an under-tone, as if not conscious her lips were moving. "This is so wonderful to me! Yet, I feel, they both spoke true—Adam Lee dying, and Robert Lee here! My heart seems to have lifted from it a great cloud—for though 'my father,' so I have called him, treated me kindly, yet I could never let my heart go out to him. There always seemed to be a grief between my heart and his! And now that I believe he slew my father, I can only regard his memory with abhorrence. It is true, he has protected my childhood and youth; but had he not deprived me of my natural protectors, and had he not my father's silver? But he may not—that general—have been my father. I may have been the daughter of some other of the passengers. My pride must not o'erleap itself, or I may fall yet lower. But who I am, I have a desire to learn. Ah, I forget in these idle reflections where I am—that I am a captive—that I am so, so miserable! Can I escape? Is there no help for me? When to-morrow evening comes, I shall not consent to his terms! What then? I dare not contemplate. Is there no dagger in this fighting vessel—no weapon I can make use of, if I have to call on Death! Ralph! O my noble Ralph! where art thou? Hast thou heard all? How wilt thy great heart bear the news? Mine bleeds for thee! What wilt thou do? Thou canst not pursue me! Thou knowest not whither I am gone!"

She clasped her hands for a few moments in despair and grief. Suddenly she started, and her face lighted up with the light of renewed intelligence.

"I will do what I can! Captain Perry was in the city, and perhaps had a vessel; and Ralph, whom he loves, might induce him to send after the pirate. Oh, hope! hope! Dare I hope? Yet it is my only hope. A pirate escaping so publicly, and defying the forts, is an insult to the naval officers in New York, and they may give chase. This is my hope! It is faint, faint, indeed! If I could only leave on the sea some trace or sign of the way we are going. I have heard of bottles being thrown overboard. Here is an ivory-inlaid desk, with perfumed note-paper. I will write—but first, how shall I set it afloat! There is no bottle here," she cried, looking carefully all around the state apartment. "Ah, I have found one!" And she seized a long and narrow Cologne bottle which stood upon the toilet.

She opened it, and poured the fragrant fluid out of the window into the sea; which she could do unseen, as the stern windows were hidden from the deck by the projection of the taffrail and heavy stern works. As she emptied the Cologne out—a more fragrant libation, and from fairer hands, than Neptune had ever received before, even when Niobe's tears fell upon his snowy locks—she noticed that one of the gulls poised himself upon the waves directly beneath, expecting food to fall into the water from her hand; for though wild, yet these birds, by keeping near vessels for months, night and day—going from one to another—are often very bold, especially when hungry, and come within a yard or two of the ships.

"If I could catch one of these, and fasten a note to his wings!" was her passing thought. "But, then, they are not like the carrier-pigeons I have read of, and would never take it to the far-off land."

To the bird she cast some crumbs of cake, which immediately picked them up, with shrill cries, which brought a score of others close beneath the stern, darting and turning in eccentric curves, and almost brushing her hand with their long, cimeter-like pinions.

"I will try and catch one. It is the best I can do!" she said.

She formed a hook of a long, Spanish hair-pin, which she saw on her toilet-table; and attaching it to a thread, after a few minutes, was overjoyed to see one of them take the hook, and flutter in captivity.

"You are a capital fisher, Rose," said the voice of Robert Lee.

She started and looked up. First detecting the Cologne in the wind, and hearing the clamor of the birds under the stern, he looked over the larboard davit, and beheld her take the bird. Rose made no reply, but drew in her bird.

"I wasn't aware you were so good a fisher, Rose. You have an odd humor to fish for birds in the sea."

She was silent. Laughing coldly, he added: "Well, take your time! I intend to be a fisher, too; and I intend to have a bird with 'golden feathers.'"

The twilight was now falling in a soft veil upon the sea.

"Could he suspect?" she asked herself. "If he had, he would have betrayed his suspicions. Now, what shall I do with my bird, which is so strong-winged and fierce? Can he serve me? I know not. But a drowning person will catch at a straw."

She secured the bird by throwing over him a hollow foot-ottoman; and then, without any definite plan as to how she should dispose of her letter, she sat down to write. Rapidly with a pencil, she wrote as follows:

"THE PIRATE SCHOONER SCORPION, }
"AT SEA, 6 O'CLOCK, P. M. }

"The writer is Rosalie Lee. She is a prisoner on board, in fear of death, or misery unutterable. She calls on all good Christians and brave seamen, who read this, to come to her aid. Especially does she hope that Ralph Turner, of whom she is the betrothed bride, will try and pursue. This vessel is full of men. Its captain is Robert Lee. She is bound to England, to the best of my knowledge. We are steering now exactly east. It is nine hours since we left New York harbor, and the land is no longer visible. Come and aid me, if this falls into the hands of any one who can."

"P. S.—I forgot to say, that the vessel is to stop at a place called Fayal, on her way to England. This schooner is full of men, and strongly armed with large guns."

"I do not know how I shall get this letter away from the vessel. I shall trust it to a kind Providence, which guided the dove to the olive-tree over the pathless flood."

"If this falls into the hands of Ralph Turner, of King's Bridge, let him know that Robert Lee has shown me proof that I am not the daughter of Adam Lee, nor his sister! This, O Ralph! is the secret which he had in his heart, that caused him to run off with me. But, dear Ralph, I will be true to you. I will die ere I become the wife of Robert Lee."

"If you get this, sail straight for Fayal."

"He has given me till then to decide between death and himself. Your faithful, and true, and loving
"Rose."

The fair reader will see that the fair captive had begun addressing no one in person; but as she went on, Ralph began to fill all her horizon, and the rest of it was addressed actually to him—as if she, in her young, and true, and hoping heart, believed he would see what she wrote: a true woman's letter. We are sure that every fair girl will "hope and pray" that he, Ralph, may get it; for did we not leave him on the deck of the "Golden Feather," but twenty-four hours behind the pirate vessel—all sail crowded, in chase; yet uncertain, however, whether the young buccaner of King's Bridge was ahead of him on that course.

When Rose had completed this missive, it was so dark in her state-room, that she could hardly see to trace the closing sentences.

"Now, what shall I do?" she asked herself, as she folded it up. She began to reflect, but was interrupted by old Wallah, who knocked on the outside to know if she "had de wax can'les lighted up?"

"No—I prefer to be in the dark," she answered.

"Berry well, missis," answered the old fellow; "you nebbber be in the dark shure, if you keep your bright eyes open!"

Rose could scarcely suppress a smile; but it was like a passing breeze upon the icy face of a fountain, bearing no ripple.

"That man seems not to have a bad heart;" she said; "yet I dare not trust any one in this dreadful vessel! If I place the note in this bottle, I cannot stop it tightly, for it has a glass stopple—and the water will fill it and sink it. I can tie it to this wild bird, but will he bear it to the land? Do they not always hover over the sea? What shall I do?"

She cast her eyes about in the twilight to see if anything could suggest itself to her.

"Could I get one of these cane chairs out through the window, it would float, and I could tie my bird and letter to it; and both together might attract the attention of some vessel."

The idea seemed to be full of hope; but the chairs of course could not be forced through a window which had bars of iron across it, at intervals of four inches.

Perhaps no situation calls forth so wonderfully the inventive qualities as that of captivity, which it is desired to escape from. All Rose's mind was active. Resolved to intermit no means of making her situation known, she paced her room and cogitated plan after plan—the sea-bird under the ottoman being the central figure around which her thoughts revolved.

"If I tie the letter under his wing, he will

dive into the waves, and it will be wet and destroyed, and all will be lost in the outset! And if he did not, the only hope of its being seen by mortal eye is, that it might be taken by some one on board some vessel, which is improbable, unless Heaven directed him—as it did the ravens, to go to the prophet. I must not be too superstitious, and believe the bird will fly into the hands of the first ship. I must think of something else—some other plan! But I won't let the bird loose till I decide fully."

So she went on to plan and think, walking to and fro. Suddenly she lighted upon an idea. In the state-room was a sort of armour or clothes-press of rosewood, which her captor told her had been filled in Kingston, Jamaica, with every article of feminine appareling; and it was all at her service. Curiosity, after Robert Lee had left her, led her to open it. She saw that it was filled with the richest dresses. She now went to it, and proceeded to remove all the ribbons from them and the hats, and soon collected a handful of brilliant streamers. It was just light enough for her to distinguish one color from another. She now went to work and wove a sort of net, which she secured at the crossings with pins. When she had completed a sort of netting—the size of her two hands—with the loose ends of ribbon, a yard long, extending from it in streamers, she laid it by her, and said:

"I think that will do, if it is not too heavy. It will be conspicuous enough."

She then took the note, and rapping it in a piece of oiled silk, which she found in one of the bonnets, she firmly tied it up—leaving strings to it. Then she carefully removed the bird, and feeding it to keep it quiet—for it beat her with its long and muscular pinions—she fitted over its back and neck, the net she had made, and tied it under his breast and all beneath its body. She then fastened a very long pennon of scarlet ribbon to each of his feet; all the while having to hold him down with great difficulty.

"This is all I can do to make it attract notice. It will be so frightened, I hope it will fly to the land for relief. If seen in the daytime from any vessel, it will be shot at and perhaps killed; and then the little package I am about to tie under his wing will be discovered!"

She, then, as carefully as she could for the pecking and fluttering of the bird, secured the oil-cloth parcel firmly to his body. Once more she examined the whole odd costume, to see if it was secure; and then, with an almost hopeless prayer on her lips, she let the bird loose, after passing it and all its gorgeous pennons carefully through the iron lattice.

"Go, good bird! Fly and bring me aid. The good winged-angels guide thee to some brave men's ship: or to Ralph, braver than all!"

It was now quite dark. She knew that the bird would not be seen if it at once flew astern, the vessel at the same time leaving it.

In an instant the sea-bird, terrified by the strange appendages, dashed away with a piercing cry. It became at once invisible. Its cry, however, continued far out in the air, and was answered by that of a score of other birds. Fainter and fainter it grew in the distance, and finally ceased altogether. Rose, with clasped hands, said, as she sank back exhausted:

"I have done all I could! I leave the event to Heaven!"

CHAPTER XVI.

We now follow the path of the wild sea-bird, leaving for the present our heroine in her captivity. The sea-gull, after leaving her hand, filled with fear at its extraordinary handling and caparisoning, darted like an arrow from the bow, astern.

The flutter of the numerous pennons of ribbons, as it claved the air, increased its terror; and now rising high in the atmosphere, now swooping close to the sea, now dashing off in a straight line, it strove to disengage itself from its appendages, all the while shrieking with anger and alarm, and followed by a cloud of screaming companions.

At length, after a tortuous flight of hours, it sunk exhausted upon a billow, and seemed to submit quietly to its fate. But the weight of the ribbons, saturated with sea-water, constantly kept it rising to escape being drawn under and drowned. At length, morning dawned, and the sun arose and the bird rested; and discerning by the light the brilliant

colors of its decorations, again started, no doubt with fresh terror; and, rising with a score of fluttering streamers into the atmosphere, flew round and round in circles, and using every device to free itself. Other birds, seeing it by the sunshine, kept aloof from the green, blue, yellow, and scarlet monster, and the bird had the whole field to its own wild swoopings.

At length, it seemed to understand that the sea was the worst place for it, and an instinct appeared to guide it landward; for though the coast was sixty miles off yet, the sea-bird knows ever its direction, and this frightened bird bent its course against the wind westward. By-and-by, beneath it, its clear eye beheld a portion of a wreck; and, descending quickly, he lighted upon the fragment of a fore-topgallant yard, which some vessel had carried away in a gale. Here the bird found safety and repose, and for hours remained immovable. Two hours before sunset, a sail was seen stretching away along the sea. It was coming down before the wind, and her course was eastward, and almost in a line with the spar on which the bird perched, but miles yet from it.

It was a charming nautical spectacle to behold the graceful bearing and swift progress of the vessel, which was an armed brigantine, schooner-rigged aft, and carrying great breadth of canvas, with an immensely-large foretopsail, almost like a sloop-of-war's. She was painted black, save a vermilion streak along her waist; and one or two of her portholes being open showed a vermilion lining. Her horizontal spars were also of a light red color. She raked so broadly, that her main-truck was vertical over the taffrail; in fact, her lofty and slender mainmast leaned back over her stern. To a seaman's eye, she was a beautiful object. Onward she came, dashing the salt spray aside from her sharp bows, and looking as if born of the sea-foam.

At her fore-topmast head fluttered a little flag, on which was a "Golden Feather."

Let us look upon her deck. The steersman is at his post, with his eye now on the foretopsail on the binnacle.

"Full east!" said the voice of a young man, who was the officer of the deck. It was Mark Manning.

"East it is, sir."

"Does the wind fall, Manning?" asked another young man, who came out of the cabin. "I think it has."

"No, Captain Turner; we are running ten knots large."

"I would it were twelve!"

"We get as much out of this wind as any craft can get," answered another of the "sixteen," all of whom might be seen in one part of the privateer or the other; for Ralph, on quitting his post, had placed his watches and set everything in order, as became a skillful seaman and naval fighter. The decks were white and clean, and in the most perfect order. The battery of guns was a model in the completeness of its arrangement. Order, quiet, discipline were established and reigned. How different was the class of faces and the bearing of the men on this honest vessel from that on the Scorpion! Nearly all of the eighty men on board were young fellows, frank-looking and bold. The "sixteen" Ralph had formed into a quarter-deck boarding-party, to be headed by himself—Mark heading the fore-castle boarders and Harry the mid-ship—for three parties of boarders were combined in the plan of attack, whether upon the enemy or upon the pirate.

Ralph now, nearly seven hours out from port (having sailed about noon), was constantly watching the horizon; now looking all about to see if any suspicious sail was in sight (for the ocean was covered with British cruisers), and now earnestly peering ahead. He kept a man constantly in the fore-topgallant cross-trees on the look-out.

"It is now nearly two hours to sundown," he said, stopping and speaking to Mark. Ten miles an hour in six hours is sixty miles. Give the Scorpion, if she is steering east, nine miles an hour, and she will be two hundred miles ahead of us, for she got twenty-four hours the start of us. This will be a long chase. Ahoy, aloft! Keep your eyes open."

"Ay, sir!"

"Do you see anything?"

"No, sir."

"It will be days before we overtake her, if we are on her track, which is doubtful," said

Ralph. "What would I not give to speak some vessel coming in?"

"Sail, ho!" suddenly called the man aloft.

"Where away?"

"Off the larboard beam."

"Not in our course," answered Ralph, with a look of disappointment; but ascending the rigging, he saw that it was a vessel beating up from the eastward, and was then on her larboard tack, which would bring her across her course not far astern, if the Golden Feather gave to.

"That is a bark," said Mark, after taking a look with a glass. "It is possible she may have seen the pirate—who, if he went east, has laid his course through her zig-zagging tack. Brace up a couple of points, and let us speak her."

In half an hour the bark was within three miles, when, as if suspecting the bad character of the vessel, she tacked and ran away on the other leg.

"It may be an English vessel," said Mark. "It is my duty to give chase. Besides, I may hear something of the Scorpion, if it is not."

In a moment, the Golden Feather was braced sharp to the wind on the starboard tack, and in full chase of the stranger. The latter displayed the American flag, but kept on her flight. The speed of the privateer on the wind was wonderful; she seemed to slip ahead of the very wind itself in her unparalleled velocity. In twenty minutes, Ralph fired a shot at the chase, which brought her topsails to the masts. In a quarter of an hour more, he was within hail, and setting the American colors, ran under her stern.

"Ship ahoy! What bark is that?"

"The Nautilus, of Bath, Captain McLellan."

"Where bound?"

"Into the capes of the Delaware."

"Have you met a low, rakish, black schooner full of men, and carrying eight guns, within a day or two?"

"Ay—ay! I passed her last night about three bells in the starboard watch, when we were on the larboard tack. She was going dead before the wind, and hailed us to heave to. We did so, and she took from us all our vegetables, fresh provisions, and what they pleased. We were thankful they gave us our lives. They were certainly pirates, sir. If you are a United States vessel; if you keep east by north half north, you will overhail her, if she keeps the course she took after they boarded us."

"You are sure it was a clipper schooner?"

"Yes; and her captain's name was Lee. I heard him called so by his men, who boarded me and spoke of him. I thought you, sir, were one of the same, and ran from you."

"I thank you for your news. It is the vessel we are at sea in pursuit of," answered Ralph, with kindling eye, and his whole manner changed to one of excitement. "Square away again, sir, and report 'the Golden Feather, privateer, Turner master.'"

"Ay, ay, sir! I hope you will take her," answered the short, bluff, Yankee captain, as he turned to give his orders for his vessel to resume her course.

Ralph had already shouted his commands to put the privateer before the wind, and once more the graceful and swift vessel went bounding like a greyhound over the waves of the sunlit ocean.

"We are not at fault, you see, Mark," he said, with joyful tones, as the brigantine was once more bending to all her canvas, and roaring in her track like an angry leviathan in pursuit of prey. "It was a fortunate thing we spoke the bark. We are now sure she is before us. Keep her away a couple of points more southwardly," he added to the man at the helm; "for we left our course that much to speak her."

The privateer in the course of a mile fell again into her exact line of course, and the look-out aloft still swept the horizon.

While Mark and Harry were talking with Ralph leaning on the capstan, as to the probability of overtaking the schooner, a voice, seemingly from the sky, cried out, with excited tones very unusual in a seaman aloft:

"Look, sir! Look there below! It is a devil!"

Ralph and his friends sprang to the bulwarks, when an extraordinary object was seen ahead, making its way wildly through the air.

"What can it be?"

"What monster of earth or sea is that?"

"My gun here—quick!" cried Ralph. "I

know not whether ghost or goblin, but I will fire at it." The excitement on board, from the quarter-deck to the fore-castle, was intense. The helmsman, in his anxiety to see what it was, nearly caused the ship to broach to. Every eye was now fixed upon the strange creature.

"It is Satan himself!" cried the boatswain, with a huge oath.

"See what feathers of all colors!"

"And long and queer ones, too."

"Isn't it a rum 'un?"

"What can it be, captain?" said Mark, who, amid the flutter of the long streamers of parti-colored ribbons, as poor Rose's sea-bird, scared up from the spar by the coming vessel, took to the air in wild circles, could only gaze with marvel like the rest.

The crew set up a loud shout, as it drew near the vessel in one of its sweeps, its gayly-colored ribbons snapping and rustling, the sun shining upon them, and lending to him a singular splendor in his coat of divers colors.

"Keep her away. That will do—as you are. It is a strange bird of some sort, but never mortal eyes saw such a one before," said Ralph. "I mean to fire and bring it down, if lead and powder will produce any effect upon such an extraordinary-looking creature!"

The bird seemed to be confined in its movements to a series of circles, as if revolving about an invisible centre; and as the vessel steered toward it in one of its swoops, the sea-gull was brought within range of the musket, with which Ralph was armed standing on the bows.

He fired, and the bird, with a shrill cry, rose straight into the air for a hundred feet, and then, turning over, fell headlong, wildly whirling round in his descent, and struck the water about forty fathoms ahead of the brigantine.

"It is a mortal bird, at least," said Harry Ballard, as he witnessed the effect of the shot.

The vessel was immediately brought up into the wind, and a boat lowered in order to secure it. Mark went in the boat by his commander's orders, and every eye was watching his progress. When he reached the bird, he uttered a loud shout, and called to Ralph:

"It is a sea-gull covered with ribbons!"

"This is very extraordinary," answered Ralph. "Come alongside with it."

As Mark returned and stepped on deck with the be-ribboned bird in his hand, the whole crew, in spite of the discipline of the ship, crowded to get a look at it.

"You see, sir," said Mark, holding the bird outstretched by the two long and slender wings, "it is a gull. It is dead! Was ever a bird dressed up in this fashion before?"

"Let me see it," said Ralph. And taking it, he examined the manner in which the network of ribbon had been fitted to the bird's body, and how the streamers were attached to its legs.

"This is not accidental, but has been done for some object," he said.

"Perhaps some crazed person had the bird, and fancied to dress it up so, and it escaped, or was let go by them," said Harry.

"Let us examine it carefully. Untie all these ribbons," he said to some of the men. The sailors soon divested the bird of all the streamers, soiled, wet, and ruined by the exposure all night on the sea. As the last ribbon was untied, a small parcel, unseen before, dropped upon the deck. The boatswain caught it up, and handed it to his captain.

Ralph took it, and, seeing that it was carefully round, said:

"This may reveal something! It seems to be something in oiled silk."

He unwrapped the coverings, and, lo! a paper, rolled carefully up, met his eyes. He seized it with eager curiosity, while his young officers gathered round, not less desirous of ascertaining what was in it. Unfolding it, he found it perfectly dry, and discovered that it was written over. A second glance made his heart bound; for he thought he recognized the writing (so familiar to him) of Rose. The first line—

"The writer is Rosalie Lee—"

caused him to tremble so (was it with joy, or what inexplicable emotion?) that the paper fell from his fingers. But, catching it up, he cried:

"It is from Rose! Look!—her name!—how wonderful! This bird seems to have been a messenger from Heaven of tidings from her! Pardon me—I cannot—read—here!"

And with great visible emotion he hastened to the cabin, as if he would veil from the eyes, even of his most intimate associates, the expression of his face as he read.

They stood looking at one another with amazement. Harry spoke, and said:

"Can it be possible that Rose Lee has written, and placed a note under the wing of this bird, and that it has reached our vessel in so marvellous a way?"

"It was certainly a note," said Harry; "for did we not catch a glimpse of the writing? I am overwhelmed with amazement at this thing. Secure the bird! Do not let it get away," he added to the men.

The brigantine still lay to; for Ralph had given no orders to fill away again, in his total oblivion of everything but the note he grasped in his hand.

Upon reaching the cabin, he read it, though with mingled feelings of joy, sorrow, anger, and vengeance; but joy and wonder prevailed, that the note, so hopelessly committed to the wild sea-bird, should have come to his hand, and within fourteen hours after it was sent.

Having concluded the perusal of it, he kissed again and again the dear signature, and then called all his officers into the cabin, and said:

"Providence is with us! This is from Rose! Hear it!"

He then read it aloud to them.

When he had ended, the young men all were seized with a spirit of vengeance. Thanking Heaven for aiding the bird to the vessel, they gave vent to their feelings of delight at knowing they were certainly on the track of the pirate.

When at length the excitement had in some degree subsided, so that Ralph could talk in ordinary tones, he said:

"You see, my friends, that the very birds of the sea bring the news where Robert Lee's vessel is. Noble and true Rose! What but inspired hope, or the extremity of despair, could have led her to trust such a messenger? And see how, that it might attract the notice of ships, she decorated it as we have beheld it! Now we have nothing to think of but her rescue. We know now, certainly, that the pirate is before us, and that Rose was, last evening, safe; and, what is more, she has some days of grace! She tells us, too, that which we could not learn from the bark—that Fayal is their destination. Now all will depend on speed. Return, my friends, to the deck; make sail on her, and give every stud-sail on board to this fair wind. If necessary, to increase our speed, we must throw half of our guns overboard; for we shall not need them in contact with the foe who is to be boarded, and fought hand to hand!"

Ralph having seen that his vessel was put under as much canvas as she could well carry, once more went to his cabin, and read the letter of Rose, and rejoiced at the earnest of her love which its glowing language betrayed.

"Who would not die for such a devoted heart?" he said. "O Robert Lee! thou child of the devil! thou mayest rob her life from me; but never can she be thine living! Alas! dear Rose, would that thou knewest how we are coming to aid thee on the wings of the wind. Thanks, oh, thanks for this letter!—for assuring me that there is respite given you! But, more wonderful news than all, that thou art not his sister! It fills me with joy, yet increases my fear. I have often gazed on thy fair, innocent, full face, and wondered that thistles should produce roses, and thorns lilies of the valley, when I contrasted thy father's—Adam Lee's—with thine, and Robert Lee's with thine!"

"Ah! Mark, come in. I am thinking over the most remarkable part of her letter—that in which Rose asserts her discovery that Robert Lee is not her brother, nor Adam Lee her father!"

"Do you not know, Master Ralph, that I have wondered at her having no likeness to them?" answered Mark. "And once, when I spoke of it to my grandfather, he shook his head, and said: 'I should not wonder, lad, if there was good reason! There was, I mind, a talk some seventeen years or more ago—when Adam Lee came back from sea, and brought that pretty little girl with him. He said that he had married a second wife over the seas, and she had died, and this child was hers; but the commoners and good wives didn't like the story, and said Adam Lee never had an angel-cherub like that!'"

"I am glad to hear this, Mark! The idea that Rose is no relation of Robert Lee fills me with joy; yet it increases my anxiety and fear. But she writes that the fiend has given her till they reach Fayal to decide between death and—but I can't speak on the subject. Now I have but one thought—to overtake this piratical monster. If I have to throw overboard half our stores, I must overtake him! Yet—no—no! This is not my vessel! Guns, stores are not mine, to be cast into the sea. I serve owners! What is one heart's love, or one maiden less on the earth, so that money is made for those who have placed me in command? I must be true to my employers, while I seek the rescue of Rose!"

"Do not despair, and take it to heart so heavily, Master Ralph," said Mark, laying his hand kindly on his shoulder. "We are running fourteen knots. Robert Lee is not more than two hundred or little more miles ahead of us. The same good fortune which sent the sea-gull to our vessel, is giving us the certainty of her safety; and our being on the right track will continue with us."

"I hope so—I will try and think so. But how my heart bleeds for Rose when I reflect upon her present misery. In what a state of constant terror must she be—knowing, too, that Robert Lee is not her brother! It drives me mad to contemplate her situation."

"Let it not occupy your thoughts, Master Ralph. You have a brave heart to meet danger in battle—"

"Yes; I would rather face a battery than this horrible suspense. I will go on deck, and see how she is running; the wind seems to increase, the way she rolls."

The young privateer captain ascended to the deck. The wind was increasing almost to a stiff gale, and was almost due aft; and before it the brigantine rolled and plunged headlong, almost dipping her yard-arms, and tossing the spray of the waves high as the fore-top, keeping the jib and flying-jib heavy with sea-water.

"Hold the reel!" called out Ralph.

"Fifteen knots, large, sir!" answered the second officer.

"That will do," he answered, with a slight smile of gratification, as he took the spy-glass from its becket on the top of the companion-way, and scanned the sea in the direction of his course.

CHAPTER XVII.

Leaving the Golden Feather in swift pursuit, across the ocean, of the Scorpion, and the latter in full flight for Fayal, one of the Western Islands, we return to the cabins of the latter, and to our heroine, captive in one of them.

When Rose had liberated the sea-bird, we have said she offered up a silent prayer that some vessel might discover it, and from its extraordinary appearance seek its capture. She then firmly secured her door by drawing the heavy furniture against it. This done, she committed herself to the care of Heaven, and, by-and-by, sunk into deep and refreshing sleep. At intervals throughout the night, she was half-awaked by the regular tolling of the half hours of the night-watches on the ship's bell; and once she thought the schooner had stopped, and she fancied she heard voices shouting one to the other; but she did not fully wake, and the sounds mingled with her dreams. This was when the Scorpion fell in with the bark, and brought her to and boarded her.

When the sun rose, she awoke refreshed; and, for a moment, ere she unclosed her eyes, she imagined she was in her room at the inn; but the sight of the cabin made her blood run cold, and her heart cease to beat for a moment—for all the horrors and peril of her situation forced itself upon her recollection. She started and listened. The noise of the rippling sea under the vessel's counter, the surge of the milk-white wake, and the cries of a flock of sea-birds alone were heard; save the regular tramp over her head of the officer of the deck, pacing fore and aft.

"I will, at least, dress in this apparel which is here," she said; "for mine is so wretched with the sea-water, and so soiled and torn I cannot wear it. I will appear, at least, before him, if he visits me, with self-respect!"

So she attired herself with becoming neatness, like a sensible girl as she was, in one of the dresses which the wardrobe contained, and arranged her hair with taste:

"Even if no one sees me to-day but the

old man who brings my food, I must appear well."

Not only did she appear well, but transcendently beautiful. Her night's repose had recovered her from all her fatigue; and if the roses had not wholly returned to her cheeks, yet they wore a tint of delicate carnation, which, harmonizing with the brilliancy of her eyes, added fresh charms to her face. There is a certain class of feminine beauty which is enhanced by being, in some degree, disturbed; to which uncertainty and slight trouble lends a piquancy which is very attractive. Such was the beauty of Rose Lee. She could not, as she gazed into the long Florentine mirror, which almost filled one side of the state-room, but confess that she was very lovely. Her eyes expressed unconscious admiration.

Suddenly a cloud overspread her features, and she sighed heavily.

"All that is now so fair in me may to-morrow be no more! I care not how beautiful I be, if I am not beautiful to the eyes of my noble Ralph! As for Robert Lee, before he shall compel me to become his, I will end my life in the dreadful sea."

There was a low knock at the door.

"Who is there?"

"Old Wallah, and missis breakfast."

"Is no one else there?"

"No, missis."

She removed the ottoman from against the door, and the African stood before it with a tempting breakfast on a large salver of chased silver; doubtless part of the spoils of some unfortunate ship captured by the former captain of the buccaneer vessel.

She partook of the breakfast, while the old man respectfully stood and awaited her orders. More than once she stole glances at his face, to see if, in extremity, he could be trusted to serve her; but his dark visage, and the heavy lines of his features, betrayed only an animal good-nature—a quality characteristic of the African.

"Do we sail very fast, Wallah?" she asked, in order to break the irksome silence.

"Oh yes, missis! Ten-knot wind m'ty fair; sea smooof as lake. Missis no sea-sick? 'Expec' to see you missis m'ty sick; but den an't hab much sea. Bym-bye, when blow gale, old Wallah shure young missis be m'ty sick."

"I hope not," she answered. But she had been so sick at heart, and under such intense excitement, that she had no thought about the sensations of the body.

Her breakfast ended, Wallah returned to say that, "Massa Capitano wants to know how missis do?"

"Tell him I am well, but wish to be alone," she answered, scarcely knowing how to reply, or whether to reply at all to the message.

At length the day passed. Robert Lee kept his word—not to approach her until sun-set, to know her decision. As the hour approached, she trembled; for she knew the resolved and evil character of the man in whose power she was. But she made up her mind to be calm, and treat him with as much forbearance as she could.

A knock was heard at the door. She recognized it as his peculiar way of rapping on a door from boyhood, by a sort of tattoo with the backs of his finger-nails. She said, evenly:

"Come in, Robert."

He entered with a wax-candle in his hand, by which she saw he was dressed with almost foppish care. He placed the candlestick upon her table, and bowing with ceremony, said:

"Rose, I have come according to my promise, to ask you if you can love me?" She was amazed at his deferential and amiable tone.

"No, Robert Lee! I can never love you."

"Rose, do you know what you say?"

"Perfectly. I can never marry you."

"You know not how madly I love you!"

"I regret it for your sake!"

"I adore you—I idolize you! You have fascinated me! Your beauty bewilders me! Oh, Rose, do not turn away from me! Once I paid suit to you when you supposed I was your brother, and did not comprehend me; but now you have no excuse—have pity upon me! I do not wish to make use of force: and if I do, it will be your own fault. You can not escape—you are eternally in my power! No power on earth or sea can take you out of my hands; I am the arbiter of your fate! Will you, will you? You shall

become my wife! If you consent with grace, and yield gently to what you cannot resist, I will render you happy, and all will go well; but if I am compelled, by your obduracy, to drag you to the altar (for the altar I offer you in all honor), you will be the sufferer. If I, who can command, sue to you, thus (and he knelt before her) ought I to be despised and insulted? Turn upon me the light of those bright eyes—smile once upon me with that angelic mouth! No! All cold and icy silence!" He sprang to his feet with a cloud of thunder upon his brow. His voice rang like an iron clarion: and catching her by the wrist, he said:

"Proud, insolent, sneering wretch. You shall rue this. You despise me, I see plainly. Very well; you shall become the wife of the man you despise. I will not degrade you; but when we reach Fayal I will send for a priest to come on board, and your fate will be sealed."

"I put my trust in heaven," said Rose, deadly pale with mingled indignation and fear.

"I laugh at all such sentiment, Rose. But now that we are at war until we are made one, I will, as generals do in war, propose a truce. It will be ten or twelve days before we reach Fayal. I will give you the freedom of the deck, to go and come as you list. I will not speak to you of love; but we will be like two strangers, whose interest it is to be courteous toward each other. Do you accept the terms?"

"I have no power to accept terms," she answered, with a troubled look. "But if you will not speak to me of love, sir, till we reach Fayal (by which time she secretly hoped Heaven would send some relief), 'I will be as affable as I can be, with so heavy a heart in my bosom.'"

"Excellent! Now we shall get along, Rose," he answered, with a smile. "I shall make it a point to be particularly civil to you. I meant to have had a faithful negro woman to serve you on board; but I came off to sea in such a confounded hurry, as you well know, I had no time to send the boat ashore for her. But an inn-keeper's daughter," he said, with slight irony, "knows pretty well how to wait on herself—hey, Rose?"

She made no reply; and he was about to make some additional remark, when came, loud and clear, the cry:

"Sail, ho!"

He rushed from the state-room, and was in a moment upon deck. The sun had just gone down in a brilliant, golden sky, which was reflected over the ocean—which looked like a sea of topaz.

"Where away?"

"Three points off the lea-bow; heading south south-west, sir."

He took his glass and ascended the rattlings of the larboard rigging a few steps; he discovered a ship laying her course nearly across that of his own vessel, having the wind, which he had aft, nearly on her starboard beam.

"Full-rigged, and carrying three top-gallant-sails! She looks like an English merchantman," he said to Captain Marco, handing this officer the spy-glass.

"Going South, perhaps for de cotton," answered Marco. "Such fellows always carry plenty gold."

"Yes; we must find out her quality. Keep her away a point," he said to the steersman.

"That will do. Now we shall about cross her bow. Captain Marco, show them our open ports; and hoist the stars and stripes at the main, and let her see 'em. Then clear the decks for action. Boarders, to your arms; captains of guns, look to your pieces; gunner, see that all the men have their ammunition. Load with a single shot, the long Tom on the fore-castle."

These, and various other orders were rapidly given; and the two vessels continually neared the same point, and as it fell dark over the sea, were but three miles apart. Robert Lee now went into the cabin, and said:

"Rose, we are about to fire our big gun! Don't let it frighten you! I must close these dead-lights, for there may be firing from a vessel we are about to attack, and I wouldn't like a chance musket-ball to kill you! If you hear firing lie flat on the floor, for the shot may come through the vessel, if our game has any heavy calibres on his deck."

The strange vessel was no sooner concealed from the schooner by the darkness, than she wore-shipped, and stood off north north-west, as if to escape from the neighborhood of a

craft that had so treacherous a look as the Scorpion plainly had.

This manœuvre was no sooner discovered than Robert Lee, satisfied she was unarmed, brought his vessel short up to the wind on the starboard tack, and went dashing off to intercept her. In an hour the ship was plainly discernible, not a mile off: for the moon had risen, and flooded her sails with light.

"Send a shot athwart her bows, Marco," ordered the young pirate chief. "It will give her a taste of our quality."

The roar of the huge engine of war was like a peal of thunder, close above the vessel—in which every joint and timber trembled like a leaf. He waited to see the result, and beheld a light run up into the rigging, and then lowered and hoisted three times, while the ship came into the wind, back her main-top-sail, and remained stationary.

"She dies easily," said the pirate captain, as he ordered his cutter to be lowered and manned.

Getting into it with ten armed men, and followed by another boat containing twenty, he pulled to the prize, and mounted to the deck.

"Who commands this ship?" he demanded, as he saw an anxious throng about the gangway.

"I do, sir!" answered a stout, fleshy man. "And if you are a Yankee privateer, we trust you will be civil to my passengers."

"Where are you from?"

"Halifax, bound to Jamaica."

"English?"

"Yes, sir."

"What is your cargo?"

"English goods and the like."

"How many passengers have you?"

"But two—an English lady and her maid."

"Excellent! It couldn't happen better! resent my compliments to the lady, and tell her I must have the serving-woman—for my sister is on board my vessel, and needs her service!"

"Do you mean to take her out of my vessel, sir?"

"Without doubt, and the lady too, if she will not let her maid go without her. Besides, I would like to know what gold you have. I am very much in need of money."

"Sir, you talk more like a pirate than a privateersman—who at least observe the laws of war!"

"You have hit it, Captain John Bull! I am a pirate, at your service."

At this confession there was a general exclamation of horror and surprise; and the crew moved away far from him, who, with a score of men at his back, stood with his cutlass drawn, and a pistol in his left hand ready to slay at a word.

"A pirate!" gasped the captain. "Then are we lost?"

"Not if you are civil. You are lucky. A privateer would have sent your ship, and you as prisoners into Boston or New York: while I only ask for your bags of money, and a few little articles for the table, perhaps, and a serving-woman to wait upon a lady on my craft. Come, sir, bring out your money, or I will make your decks like shambles in five minutes!"

It was in vain for the captain to resist the demand. With a heavy heart he ordered his men to bring up four boxes of gold and five of silver, which were passed into the boats.

"Now for the maid."

"She will not go, sir. Her mistress will not let her be taken."

"So then I will take both mistress and maid."

In ten minutes more, not only the lady, but her servant, with all their luggage, was transferred to the pirate boats; shrieking, and wild with despair, and struggling to escape from their fate by leaping into the sea. Their voices were heard by Rose, and thrilled to her soul.

"Oh! what other poor females are come hither to this place of hell!" she exclaimed.

Ere long her door was opened by Robert Lee, and his men came bearing into the state-room, one after another, the two females. The lady was almost insensible, while the young woman struggled madly with her captors. But no sooner did she see the beautiful face of Rose, than, with a cry of surprise and delight, she flew to her, and clasping her knees, said:

"Oh, lady, save me; save my mistress from

these dreadful men—for you have the face of an angel, though I find you here."

"Here Rose, is company for you. I brought them wholly out of regard for you: knowing you would be lonely. Here is a maid to wait on you. I hope you will all enjoy yourselves now in each others' society. Just tell the lady from me, we don't intend to harm her!"

Thus speaking, Robert Lee left the state-room for the deck; and the two vessels parting company, were soon lost to each others' sight, in the obscurity of opposite horizons.

"I will do what I can, poor girl," answered Rose, as she raised the young English servant-girl to her feet. "But I am only a captive here. Lady," she added, going toward the mistress, who sat with her head in her hands looking vacantly around in blank despair, as if her situation were too dreadful for tears or cries, "I feel deeply for you."

The lady looked steadily at her, and said:

"So young—so fair—and yet—"

"A captive to the captain, lady."

"Ah, then are you to be pitied also! What fearful destiny awaits me?"

"He will not harm you."

"Harm me? Has he not already torn me from the vessel on which I was going to meet my son; is not death, or nameless horrors before me, in the power of such a man?"

"Your lot is to be deplored, lady. But I have no doubt he will release you at Fayal, so that you can return to your friends."

"How soothing your voice is! How sweet to look at you, and listen to you, fair girl!" said the lady, who was a beautiful and dignified English woman, about forty-three or four years of age; her whole appearance characterized by high breeding, and thorough refinement.

"Will he not kill us, mistress?" asked the blonde servant-maid.

"Do not fear him! I hope, madam, you will try to compose yourself. It is inevitable that you must remain on board for ten or twelve days."

The lady groaned deeply. Rose gently placed her arm around her, and kissed her, and said:

"Pardon me, but I wish to soothe you. I feel in part to blame, for this outrage in bringing you on board; for he says that it was in order that I might have company. I hope, kind lady, you will forgive my unconscious part, and try and be resigned. Be assured he will leave us three here undisturbed. Where were you going?"

"To Kingston, in Jamaica, to meet my son, who is a young man of three-and-twenty. Alas! the sea is always fatal to my family. He will be there awaiting me; and when the vessel arrives, and he hears that I have been torn from it by a pirate, it will drive him crazy. Oh! my poor, poor boy; what sorrow is in store for thee and for me?"

And here she clasped her hands in agony, and wept freely. The girl also sobbed as if she could never be consoled, her face laid in her mistress' lap.

We now pass over the events which followed this addition to the passengers on the Scorpion. Day by day the lady, who proved to be an English countess, became more and more reconciled to her hard fate—especially as between her and Rose an intimacy, the most pleasing, had grown up, and an intercourse, such as might be between an intelligent mother and lovely daughter. The maid, Mary, also became resigned, and employed her time in the service of both ladies, equally.

Robert Lee, by degrees, had taken advantage of this better state of things occasionally to present himself in their presence, and assuring the lady that she should be at liberty as soon as the schooner reached Fayal.

Neither of the ladies had touched upon personal history. All that the countess knew of Rose's antecedents was, that she was an orphan, and that this pirate chief had run off with her, hoping to win her consent to marry him.

But one afternoon, as the schooner, after weathering a three-days' terrible gale, came in sight of Fayal with English colors flying, Rose, feeling her confidence drawn out more and more toward the charming English lady, at her request entered into particulars, and told her all that she knew about herself, viz., how she had been taken by a pirate at sea, adopted by him as his daughter, brought up with Robert Lee as a sister, and beloved by him, after he had discovered that they were unrelated. In the midst of the narrative, and

before the lady could make a remark, Robert Lee came, and said:

"We are in sight of our port! Come on deck and see the romantic scenery of the island."

The words made Rose shudder as if ice had been laid upon her heart. The announcement was the seal of her fate. She made no reply, but cast herself into the arms of the countess, and burst into tears:

"This word is the knell of my life!"

"You will not marry him?"

"Never—never—never! Let me die!"

"Lonely sufferer! I am helpless. Let us go on deck! Perhaps we may be noticed, and inquiries made that may turn out for our benefit."

They went on deck, and Robert Lee began to point out the various points of the scenery, as the harbor opened. The Scorpion moved in slowly, as she had lost her mainmast in the gale. Robert Lee was as cool and cavalier as if the ladies were ordinary "passengers." In his power they felt it their duty to conciliate him so far as was possible. So much were the captain and his men occupied with objects aboard, that they had not observed, among several other vessels making the port, including a frigate under English colors, and with the bows of her fore and main-top-gallant masts, a brigantine very low in the water, with very square yards and long spars, coming up astern, hand over hand, and not two miles off. Suddenly it attracted the attention of Captain Marco—who, after a close look, seized his glass with an oath.

"Captain Lee, that is de privateer we leave in New York harbor thirteen days ago!" he shouted.

The pirate captain turned quickly, and instantly cried: "It is the same. It looks as if I have been chased! How could he have known I was coming to Fayal? Clear the deck for a fight, lads! Ladies, go below. He is coming on with a bone in his teeth, and in our crippled condition will, I fear, overhaul us before we get to the anchoring-ground under the port."

The Scorpion was now pressed onward into the port. The brigantine came on rapidly, gaining every moment. The Scorpion at length reached her anchorage; and while his men were letting go his anchor, he was conveying his treasures of boxes of gold and silver into his boat. He had not time to take his chest of plate, as the Golden Feather already began to open her fire, but he plundered it of what he could on the spur of the moment.

"We can't defend her, men. Take my advice and get into the boats, and pull ashore. We are only pirates taken on our own deck; on land, nobody has a right to ask our business. That frigate coming in will help the brigantine, if need be, and we shall be nowhere. Fly, my men. I will share my gold with you on shore!"

He then entered the cabin, and taking Rose in his arms, bore her with muffled lips to his boat, bearing the countess and her maid below. In a moment, the Scorpion was deserted, and the pirates in their boats were pulling for the shore under the fire of the privateer. Before they reached it, a jet of flame rushed up the foremast from a torch left to fire the vessel by Captain Marco, and the two females rushed on deck shrieking for aid. Onward, like a white-winged angel of vengeance, came the Golden Feather, delivering her fire as she advanced. Suddenly Ralph Turner, who stood upon his deck, saw the boats leave and the flames ascend, shouted to his steersman to bring the privateer alongside, for he believed that Rose was one of the females he beheld in such mental extremity.

"They have deserted her!" he cried. "There is Rose! Get ready to man the boats, and pursue the cut-throats, while I board the schooner and save her. Have your buckets of water ready, lads."

The next moment, the Golden Feather was brought to within two lengths of the pirate vessel; and leaping into a boat, a few strokes of the oars placed Ralph on her deck. While his men ran to extinguish the flames, he rushed to the females; but seeing that both were strangers, he cried:

"Where is she? Rose—where?"

The countess pointed to the boats; and then, with a grateful cry, fell fainting with joy at her own deliverance at his feet. He raised her up, and placing her in Mark's charge, with the girl who was wild with de-

light, and then calling all his men and boats, he gave chase after Robert Lee, whom he saw bearing off with him the fair form of Rose.

CHAPTER XVIII.

We might linger here to describe the joy with which Ralph Turner and his friends came in sight of the Scorpion just as she was making for the port of Fayal! We could report their exclamations, their animated conversations, their expressions of hope that they should overhaul the chase, now in full view, before it should get into port. But having already shown the Golden Feather as having actually captured the pirate vessel, we will not go back to paint scenes already past.

When Ralph discovered that the females on board were neither of them Rose, and beheld her borne shoreward, no pen can paint his disappointed and fierce rage. Shouting to his boats to follow, he pursued the buccaners, who had full half a mile the start of him. The quay was about three quarters of a mile from where the Scorpion was; and while Ralph was pulling at the top-speed of his cutter over the first quarter, Robert Lee was pulling on the last quarter. He did not, however, steer in toward the quay, which was thronged with people; but, veering to the right, he pulled straight for the stairs of a chapel, which overhung the water a hundred fathoms beyond the main landing.

Here he landed, and, followed by two of his men bearing Rose in their arms, he hurried up the steps into the chapel—at the door of which stood a priest, with a cross upon his breast.

"Haste, holy father! here is gold!" And Robert Lee flung into the skirt of his stole a handful of gold. "Not a moment's delay!—unite me and this maiden ere yonder boat comes up, and I will double-quadruple thy fee!"

The fleshy priest, without a word, gathered up the gold, and ran into the church, beckoning Robert Lee to follow him. He did so, with Rose, more dead than alive, borne in after him by two men—one of whom kept his sash held close down upon her mouth, while the other so confined her arms that she could not struggle. The heavy church doors closed upon them!

In the meanwhile, the English frigate which was laying her course into the harbor, and not far astern of the Golden Feather, seeing this latter vessel—at the peak of which flew the American privateer signal—was attacking a schooner with the English flag flying at her mast-head, bore down to the aid of the schooner, supposing her an English vessel chased by a Yankee privateer.

"An impudent dog," said the commander of the frigate, to dare to attack her right in our sight." And he crowded on sail toward the Golden Feather.

"Look, my lord! the English crew have taken to their boats, and the Americans have given chase in theirs," said an elegant young officer, whose uniform showed that he was the chief lieutenant of the frigate, which carried forty-four guns, and, save the loss of some of her spars in the late gale, was one of the finest ships in the British service.

"I see it, Arthur. What can it mean?"

"There is a female in one of the boats; they seem to be flying with her to the shore."

"Well, we will soon find out. Send a shot into that privateer, as an invitation to surrender. If she has taken the schooner we will return the compliment, and capture her!"

The frigate fired three guns; and then, as the privateer did not surrender, she laid her along side, and took her by a small boarding-party; for not twenty men, under Harry, were left on board of her. He made no resistance; but said he could not surrender while his captain was on shore. The young officer, whom the commander addressed familiarly as Arthur, headed the party which took possession of the Golden Feather.

"What vessel is this?" he demanded.

"An American privateer."

"Your captain?"

"Ralph Turner."

"You are bold to attack an English vessel, with a British frigate half a mile astern of you!"

"We attacked a pirate, sir. This vessel is a buccanier! We have chased her across the Atlantic. She ran in here under English colors; and hence you are deceived."

"Ah, then! that changes the affair!" said

the officer, who now, looking across the deck to the deck of the schooner which lay alongside of the Golden Feather, uttered a cry of surprise, and the next moment was answered by the lady on the deck, with a shriek of wild joy:

"My son—my son! Oh, Arthur!—my son—my son!"

The next moment he had cleared the bulwarks, and was clasping to his heart the English countess—embracing her again and again, and saying:

"My mother—my dear, dear mother! how came you here? What a wonderful meeting!"

For a few moments she could not speak for the suffocation of joy and surprise; but then answered:

"Our ship was taken by this pirate! I have not been harmed; we were treated with respect. He had on board a young lady he had captured, and was bringing her to this place, to marry her against her will—and he took us out of our ship as her companion. The pirate-chief escaped with her in his boat, as the vessel came up. Alas! Rose—Rose! I fear she will be lost!"

"Rose?"

"Rose Lee!"

"From New York?" he exclaimed.

"Yes; her brother, Robert Lee, is the pirate! She had a lover—Ralph Turner—who commanded this pursuing vessel; for she saw him on her deck, through her cabin window. The pirate flies with her—the lover pursues!"

"And I, also, my dear mother!" he cried; "for I owe to that maiden my life! Come with me (is this your maid?) on board, and let me place you in charge of your brother—Lord Henry—who is in command; and while you tell him your surprising story, I will aid in the rescue of this fair girl. To her and her lover I owe my reunion with you!"

"Oh, save her, Arthur!"

In five minutes more a long launch from the frigate, filled with armed men, was in swift motion to the shore.

The priest, in the meanwhile, had got before the altar, and had begun to hurry the service; while Rose was supported by Robert Lee, with his arm around her, and held up, also, by Captain Marco. Suddenly, in the midst of the mumbled rites, she leaped across the chancel rail, snatched the heavy-jeweled cross from the breast of the officiating priest, and fled like a deer around the altar. Robert Lee was about to leap after her, when the strong priest forced him back, with his hand against his heart, with:

"Sacereligious heretic! dare you profane the sanctuary?"

Robert Lee drew back; but only to grasp the hilt of his dagger, with which, bounding forward, he struck the priest to the heart; and then, leaping across his body, pursued the maiden. Captain Marco was too superstitious to follow into such sacred precincts; but, seeing that Rose passed out of the high altar into a side aisle, he ran to intercept her. As she passed him, he extended his arm to arrest her, when she struck him with the heavy cross so sharp a blow in the face, that he staggered back, with execrations upon her. In the meanwhile, there were heard sounds of firing at the door, and the clashing of steel. It was the crew of the Scorpion, whom Robert Lee had ordered to remain there, and guard the door, defending it against the charge of the crew of the Golden Feather. The next moment they gave way before the flashing cut-las and battle-cry of Ralph Turner, who, cutting down right and left, with Mark by his side, burst into the church.

At this moment Rose was flying for her life down the long aisle, toward the door, Robert Lee bounding after, with his blood-reeking dagger brandished in his hand, and menacing her with death if she did not stop! At a glance, though she was a hundred feet off, saw all her peril. Each instant the pirate-chief was gaining upon her. Ralph sprang forward, crying to her, as he saw him in the act of throwing his dagger at her:

"Hold, monster! Do not do it! Rose, fly to me!"

Fast as he was running up the aisle over the intervening space, he felt that she must be killed ere he could reach her, when he heard the shrill whistle of a bullet past his ear, and the next moment saw Robert Lee leap half his height into the air, while from a deep-red spot in his forehead the blood spouted out, and deluged his face. With an acute

cry of pain, and an oath of disappointment, he fell forward, dead, upon his face!

The next moment, Rose was nestled close to her lover's heart, like a terrified and pursued dove that has found shelter in its own nest from the pursuing hawk. How she trembled for joy and wonder! Was it a dream? Was it in Ralph's arms she found herself inclosed, heart throbbing against heart?

"O Ralph!" she gasped—"O Ralph! you have come and saved me!"

He could not reply for emotion; but, drawing the trembling girl near to his bosom, he whispered in her ear:

"Rose, this is the happiest moment in my life. It was your sea-bird that directed me here!"

"That was a good shot of mine!" said Mark, as he came up.

"Was it your good eye and true hand that sent that ball into the monster's brain?" said Ralph, grasping his friend's hand. "Here, Rose, thank him; he is your friend and mine forever!"

At this moment there was a sound of voices heard; and one came in, and said they were about to be attacked by a boat's crew from the English frigate. Ralph at once hastened to the scene, leaving Mark, for the moment, with Rose; and when he arrived outside he beheld indeed a party of English sailors, headed by an officer, advancing upon the run toward the church. The officer, however, held a white handkerchief in his hand, and waved it, in token of amity. Scarcely had Ralph got a glimpse of his face than he ran toward him, and, to the surprise of both parties, who expected to see them meet in battle, they warmly embraced.

"Is it true, then? Is she safe?"

"Safe! and the villain is dead!"

"Where is she?"

"Come with me."

This conversation, brief as it was, was understood mutually; for both had the same thought on the mind—the fate of Rose. As soon as Rose beheld him, she started with pleasurable surprise, exclaiming:

"Arthur Percy?"

"Yes, fair Rose. I little expected to meet you here. How wonderful the scenes you have passed through! And that is the cruel brother who has done all?" And he pointed to the dead body of Robert Lee. "I remember his face well. And he was, then, a pirate, as you feared?"

"Yes," said Rose; "but he is not my brother! I have since learned it."

"That, then, is good news. But do you know who the lady was who was your companion in the vessel?"

"An English lady."

"And my mother?"

"Your mother, sir?"

"Yes. I was amazed as well as overjoyed to meet her. She had sailed from Halifax for Jamaica, where she had an estate. I, in my frigate, after we had touched the shores of America to land a messenger to the army in Canada, was bound direct, also, to Jamaica, where my presence was needed in settling the estate; and only put in here because we were blown out of our course, and needed spars."

"How wonderful this meeting here!" said Ralph.

"Yes, on all sides. Now, my dear friends, to whom I owe my life, you must permit me to play the host, and compel you to consent to be my guests on board the frigate. You have seen her before, Captain Turner; and but a short while since, when you left me on board."

"Yes; and it was during my absence that dear Rose was carried off by Robert Lee."

The priests of the church now crowded round, and made a great outcry at the desecration of their sacred edifice by the slain body; and, after having given them money to defray the expenses of burial, the whole party left. And, greatly to the surprise of the wondering people of Fayal, the American and English sailors mingled together on their way to their boats. As for the buccaneers, they soon dispersed among the hills, and hid themselves, save five or six who were wounded, and whom Ralph handed over to the authorities.

The "Golden Feather," instead of being detained by the English commander, who was the uncle of Arthur Percy, was given up, and the schooner recognized as her lawful prize.

Passing over the happy meeting between Rose and the countess, not excepting their contented English maid-servant, and the presentation of Ralph, Mark, and Henry to the commodore, we will take our readers into the state cabin, where, after dinner, the whole party are assembled.

"Now," said Lord Barnwell—the captain of the frigate—after they had drunk wine to the happy reunion of Ralph and Rose, "come, fair girl, let us hear your history. My sister, the countess, has told me of her wonderful adventures, and deeply interested me in you, as any one must be who could see your face; for I do not know why, but your looks have a singular fascination over me."

"And over me, Rose, a most wonderful feeling comes, when I gaze upon you," said the countess. "If I believed in the transmigration of souls, I should believe we had lived and loved each other in another state of being."

Rose, all joy and love—and seated by Ralph—smiled, and said:

"It is so with me, Lady Isabel. It seems as if I had seen you in my dreams, before we met in that vessel's cabin."

"The countess tells me, fair Rose, that you for eighteen years supposed yourself to be the daughter of an inn-keeper in America, and the sister of his son, who, it seems, turns out a pirate."

"Yes, sir. So I was educated to believe."

"Then you do not know your parentage?"

"No, my lord!"

"Nor of what country?"

"No, sir!"

"This must be a painful mystery to you."

"It would be, my lord, but now I have—"

Here she stopped and blushed so beautifully, and looked into Ralph's eyes so confidently, and lovingly, and happily, that it did not require words to express, what we will, however, put into words: That now she had Ralph, he was name, family, country, the whole world to her.

"I dare say," said the commander, with a quiet smile answering her looks, as if she had really spoken; "but still, it would be pleasant to find out your family."

"Yes, my lord, for Ralph's sake. He might wish to know who I am."

"I am content, Rose, so you are not of the blood of Adam Lee," answered Ralph. "You perceive, my lord, that the supposed brother, in some way, got the secret that she was not his sister, and chose then to carry her off, to try and compel her to love him, and marry him."

"In which he has been nicely defeated. A romantic and tragic affair altogether. Miss Rose," continued the commander, cracking nut, "have you no recollection of your early life?"

"I think so; but know not how to distinguish it from the dreams of childhood."

"What do you recollect?"

"I think I recollect a lovely face, but indistinct. Sometimes I have thought it was like that of the Countess Isabel. But I can trust to nothing certainly of any impressions; for my earliest definite recollections are with the inn where I was brought up."

"Relate to my brother what you told me," said the countess.

"Perhaps I had best let his lordship read aloud this paper," she said. "I found it in the chest of plate."

"What chest?" asked Ralph and the commander, in the same breath. For the reader must recollect that Ralph has not all the information of the facts of this story. Of the chest, he knew nothing; for, as yet, Rose had had no opportunity of entering into the particulars of what was past, having only told him the general outline of the events with which she was so intimately associated.

"I see I must tell the whole story," she said; "but it will, I fear, be tedious."

"By no means," said the captain.

"Let us hear all, dear Rose," said Ralph; "for I heard of no chest."

"And that reminds me," said the countess, "that the boxes of gold and silver, which were taken from the ship I was in, were put by the pirates into their boat, and ought to be searched for."

"I had their boats taken possession of, dear mother," said Arthur Percy; "and they are now alongside, with the boxes in them; but are you sure that they contain gold and silver?"

"Without doubt."

"I will then see that they are at once brought on deck. I supposed it was shot, it was so heavy, and from the looks of the boxes."

"Yes; the captain had his money packed in that way, not to be suspected. But they compelled him to confess he had it; and so took it off."

"Excuse me; and, Miss Rose, pray defer your account until I come back."

He then left the table to give the necessary orders for the transfer of the coin to the frigate's deck. When he returned, he said:

"It is so. I had one of them opened."

"How much is there?" asked Lord Barnwell.

"Not less than ten thousand pounds, if four are gold and five are silver."

"A large sum. It must be returned to the captain when we reach Kingston. He will be not a little gratified, as well as surprised, to wake up some morning, and see his boxes of money arriving on board again, from my boats alongside."

"What has the paper you have in your hand to do with the chest?" asked Ralph of Rose.

"I took it out of it?"

"Where?"

"At the inn."

"Whose chest was it?"

"It was Adam Lee's—at least, was in his possession. But it was not his property. He had come unlawfully by it. It was in defending it he lost his life."

"Did you then know how he was killed?" asked Mark.

"Yes. I overheard the quarrel. It was the pirate chief who slew Adam Lee, who was defending the chest. He fell over upon it. Then Robert Lee slew the pirate, to avenge his father's death. The two men, Robert Lee and the pirate captain, had come together to carry away the chest of silver-plate, when Adam Lee entered the place of concealment under ground, and so lost his life! I saw them both lie there dead. Then Robert Lee went out to get men to carry off the chest. But before he went, he took the key of it from his father, who made a strange dying confession, which I heard, and opened it to see what was in it. He then shut it, but did not look it, and went out. The dying confession of Adam Lee gave me the first intimation I ever had that he was once a pirate, and that I was not his own daughter! By it, too, I overheard that he had robbed a ship of the chest, and had killed the owner, and carried off his wealth and his child! So I opened the chest hurriedly, and took from it a ring, locket, bracelet, and this paper—hoping, at some time, they might show me my real parentage."

"Read the paper," said the captain. And all prepared to listen to the countess, in whose hands Rose had placed it.

CHAPTER XIX.

The paper which the Countess Isabel began to read was, as Rose now stated, in the handwriting of her father—that is, of Adam Lee, whom she had so long regarded as her father. The countess, in a clear, trained voice, firmly-toned and well modulated, so that it was a pleasure to listen to its accents, thus began:

"I, who rite this, am Adam Lee. I shall sign it with my own signature. I am the keeper of the Rose Oake Inn; but considering the uncertain condition of a man's life, I wish to say a few words to any honest person who may find this paper. This chest of silver-plate was wrongfully come by, and was got by the price of blood; and as I don't want to have this matter on my conscience in the other world, with all my other evil deeds, I leave this writing to be found after my death, so that justice, though late, may be done to an orphan girl, which is Rose Lee, my Golden Feather, and which I love as dear as if she was my own blood and bones, and have tried to make her happy and contented—for I felt I had done her a great injury; and so I would not touch an ounce of the silver that rightfully belonged to her, but have hid it away in this chest; where it will be found after I die, if she doesn't get married before to some nice young fellow; in which case, if I like him, and she marries with my consent, I mean to give her fortune, which is all which is in this chest."

"This is a very singular document," said the commander, Lord Barnwell; "but though the writer is illiterate, yet he makes his meaning clear, though with a good deal of circumlocution. By it we understand, Miss Rose, that you are not his daughter, and that the chest containing the silver he speaks of belonged rightfully to you, and his conscience led him to preserve it. Where is the chest now?"

"On board the Scorpion, my lord!" answered Rose. "It was carried off by the captain, Robert Lee, when, as I told you, the pirate-chief and Adam Lee were slain in the underground chamber, where it was concealed!"

"Arthur, will you see that the chest is at once properly guarded?" said Lord Barnwell.

"You forget, uncle," answered the young officer, "that you have recognized the Scorpion as the lawful prize of my young friend and captain of the Golden Feather, here!"

"True, I had forgotten it. And, as you seem in a fair way, my dear sir," added the noble sailor to Ralph, "to secure the lawful owner of this mysterious chest, why it is in its proper place under your protection. Go on, Lady Isabel!"

Arthur here rose to give an order, by Ralph's request, for the chest to be brought on board.

"Now, I wish to tell how I got the chest, and all about it, so if, by-and-by, Rose wants to find out her relations, she can have a clue; but while I live, I can't give her up to anybody—for I love her as my own daughter. The doctors says I have a heart disease, and may go off at any time, so I want to keep my log all writ up and ship-shape with death and the other world. As I sed my name is Adam Lee. I took to pirating afore I was twenty, from a natural evil way of life as was in me. Well, I got to be a skipper of a pirate craft and seventy men, and we cruised about the Spanish Main, and sometimes off the Bahamas, and sometimes off the coast of New England and New York. One day, in 1796 or 1797, I forget which—for it is now 1812—near the Bermuda, I fell in with a ship steering southe. She had just stopped there—for I saw her coming out of the porte. She proved to be an English ship of five hundred tons. I ran for her, and she gave me the heel, and we had a hard chase of it for two hundred mile or more—for I was two days chasing her, wind baffling, but mainly from the W. and S. W. But I got within range, and opened upon her, when, after giving me several ugly shots, killing five of my people, and wounding as many more, she struck her colors. My anger was up, and I told my men to give no quarter. The upshot of it was, we drove the sailors all into the sea, or killed them on the deck; but the officers and passengers fought desperately, for they knew there was no mercy in my eyes!"

"What a desperado!" exclaimed Arthur Percy, "and yet, for I saw him at the inn, he was a fair enough specimen of a well-fed landlord!"

"I never suspected of him such evil!" said Rose. "He never spoke a loud word to me in his life!"

"He seems to have been a penitent man toward the last!" said Lord Barnwell.

The countess resumed:

"They was lede on by a tall military man, who fought like a lion, and, I believe, would have recaptured the ship from my men, if I hadn't resolved that he should die or I! So I paid no attention to the bullets and swords that were aimed at me—no more than as if they were feathers—and got to him and cut him down. But a boat got off from the ship, carrying a lady with her, who shrieked for her child. The rest was quick work. They took to the water, and soon were shot as they swum; and so we had the vessel all to ourselves; but I could not capture the boat which had the lady. Now comes about this chest you'll find this paper in. There was a little girl, about two years' olde, sleepin' in the cabin all the while the fight was going on; and I found her there, with a negro woman by her, and I took pity on the child, and told the woman I would not hurt it, nor her neither, if she was its nurse. She told me it was the daughter of the brave officer; they called him General—"

Here the countess, who had read rapidly and excitedly, shrieked. The paper fell from her hand, and she turned deadly pale, while her brother, Lord Barnwell, started to his feet, and ran to her, and said, as their eyes met:

"Can it be the ship, Isabel?"

"Oh, it must be—it was my husband—I am sure! Merciful Heavens! can it be that—"

"What is this deep emotion? What have you discovered?" asked Ralph, with intent, while Rose looked at Lady Isabel with startled curiosity.

"My husband was General, Lord Neville, who was Governor of Jamaica. He went out with me and my child, two years old, who had a black nurse, to go to Jamaica. The vessel was chased and boarded in just this way. I had rushed on deck, leaving my child asleep to plead with my husband to conciliate the pirates, when some persons, who were crowding into a boat, seized me and tore me from the ship; and since then I have never seen my husband and child—unless—" and here she fixed her gaze earnestly on the face of Rose, who was trembling with a strange feeling of—she knew not what—coming joy.

"Unless you behold her here in this lovely girl!" said Lord Barnwell.

"Oh! shall I call her my child? Shall I embrace you, Rose, as my daughter?" And

she was about to rush to her, when Lord Barnwell cried:

"Not yet, not yet, sister! Lest the reaction be fatal, should it prove false. Be patient—be calm, all of you, for I see you, Arthur, are greatly excited, and believe you have recovered a long-lost sister! Be patient for a few minutes! Suspend all your opinions! I will finish this paper. It may throw more light."

The eager group listened with strange emotion. Arthur had to support his mother, and soothe her, but she would not release the hands of Rose, as she kept murmuring:

"She is—she is—she is my child!"

Lord Barnwell, whose voice was tremulous as he read, resumed:

"They called him General; and she told me that a chest of plate I saw was also his. There was a name on the chest, which I have torn off; but I have remembered it. It was 'Arthur Neville!'"

"She is—oh, she is my child!" shrieked the countess; and casting herself into the arms of Rose, she fainted away.

"That seems settled now!" exclaimed Lord Barnwell, "so far as this paper can settle it! Come, sister, let not joy kill you!" And, aided by Arthur, he bore her to a settee, while Rose, bewildered and not knowing how to realize all, knelt by her, and strove to arouse her. She dared not call her "mother," lest she should not be; but, suddenly recollecting herself, and wishing to verify so much happiness, she said to Ralph:

"I have here a locket, a bracelet, and a ring, which I took from the chest. The locket I never could open, as it has a secret spring."

Ralph was about to place these jewels in the hands of Lord Barnwell, when Arthur, who had brought his mother to consciousness, exclaimed:

"Look! Here comes the chest!"

Two men brought it at this instant into the cabin, and Arthur, opening it, took out a piece of plate, a silver urn, and exclaimed, with wild joy:

"It is our arms! This is our family plate, my lord! Look, dear mother!"

The countess, roused by the exclamations, no sooner saw the chest, than with a cry of joyful surprise, she bounded toward it, crying:

"It is the chest! It is our plate! Can there be any more doubt that Rose is my daughter? Oh, keep me not from her!"

Ralph then said:

"Here, my lady, are jewels Rose gave me. She took them from the chest!"

"Mine—mine all! And see!" she cried, "here is my husband's likeness!" and springing the locket, she revealed a handsome, military-looking man, the resemblance of whose eyes and mouth to those of Rose made Lord Barnwell exclaim:

"It is enough! This locket is proof indisputable, were there no other. Rose, fly to your mother's arms!"

For a few minutes there was heard nothing but the voice of tears vailing low words of happiness; and the solemn scenes of deep emotion which reigned, cannot be described. Let the reader imagine all.

"But, my dear mother, do not keep Rose all to yourself; for, if she is your daughter, she is my sister!" said Arthur, tenderly embracing her with tears and smiles; while Rose, blushing to be in the arms of the handsome spy, herself knew not whether to withdraw or linger like a sister in them.

"And I have found a niece, too, and must have my kiss!" said the noble old sailor, as he drew the happy Rose to his heart, and pressed her forehead affectionately, while great tears rolled out of his eyes, and he sobbed like a school-boy.

What can we say more? The story is told. The mystery is ended; our part is done—the imagination of the reader must supply all that the pen cannot compass.

Three days after this happy denouement of our plot, the British frigate and the Golden Feather might have been seen decorated with flags, while in the cabin, just as the sun was setting in a blaze of glory, stood up a noble and handsome pair before the chaplain of the frigate, hand clasped in hand, taking before Heaven the solemn pledge of loving and eternal truth one to the other. Need we name them? Around stood Lord Barnwell, all smiles, with a white rose in his button-hole, close by the bride the happiest woman in the world, her mother (oh, how that new

and sweet word made the heart of Rose warm with happiness and peace!), the Countess of Neville. Then came the manly Mark, happy because Rose and Ralph were happy; and Henry Ballard, pensive, yet rejoicing with both; and in a half-circle around stood the band of the other fifteen lovers and rescuers, each with a rose in his jacket and smiles on each face.

When the benediction was pronounced, the bridegroom, having pressed the lips of his bride and also her mother, brother, and her uncle, whispered a word to Rose, when, with beautiful blushes, she offered her cheek to each of the brave fellows, her band of true and faithful rescuers!

Now the ship shook with the roar of cannon, to which responded the guns of the Golden Feather, while other vessels in the harbor re-echoed the bridal salute!

CHAPTER XX.

The state-room on board the Golden Feather having been fitted up by the exquisite taste of Lady Neville for the bridal couple, they at once took up their quarters on board. Parties were given on shore to them, and for several days there were rejoicings, greatly to the delight of the citizens of Fayal.

To have seen the fraternal manner in which the English and American seamen visited one another on board their respective vessels, no one would have supposed the two countries were at war; and, fortunately, to consolidate their good feeling, two weeks after the wedding a ship came in, bearing the welcome news that a treaty of peace had been ratified, and the two countries were at war no longer.

Ralph now resolved to return to New York with his prize, of which he gave Mark the command.

Lady Neville endeavored to prevail upon him to go to England; but, as he could not do so until he had placed his vessel and his friends once more safely in New York, she resolved to accompany her recovered daughter.

Just before the sailing of the Golden Feather and her prize, Lord Barnwell called Ralph into his state-cabin, and said:

"My dear young friend, I wish now to say a few words with you at the request of my sister and nephew, Lord Arthur Percy Neville. We all feel so perfectly happy that I desire nothing should mar your happiness. You are a noble young gentleman, and have shown yourself worthy to be allied with the best blood of England, as, without vain boasting, I can assure you, you are. You deserved Rose, and she is yours. You have generously tendered to Lord Arthur, your brother-in-law, what remains of the plate and jewels. He has refused to receive more than one or two pieces, as memorials of his father. The only thing we both, as well as my sister, Lady Isabel, regret in this whole affair is, that you should have married one who, though—as is clearly established—of noble blood, is without a fortune!"

"Sir—my lord, what do I care for a fortune with my wife? When I loved Rose, I did not suppose her rich, or other than the daughter of Adam Lee, the innkeeper. We were both poor. I have the promise of a lieutenantancy in an American frigate, on my return. This will be fortune enough for dear Rose and me."

"You are a generous fellow! But let me tell you just how affairs stand. My noble brother-in-law, the Earl of Neville, was a gallant soldier, as well as an anciently descended noble. But he came to an estate somewhat embarrassed, when he got to be of age; and it was on this account, and partly to reward his services with the army in Spain, that the Crown, in 1796, conferred upon him the rich office of governor of Jamaica."

"He was on his way thither, with his family plate and the rest of his fortune, when his ship was taken by this pirate, Adam Lee, and he himself slain. The Crown, on hearing of this calamity, generously bestowed upon the widow, Countess Isabel, the estate which her husband had bought beforehand, but had not paid for. But I weary you. To make a long story a short one, what I wish to say is, that when young Arthur—who was left at school in England, came to be sixteen, he saw that he would, when he became of age, come to a title which he would not have the means of supporting with dignity; for the

property of his mother in Jamaica proved to be of little value without a horde of slaves to cultivate it. The result was, he entered the navy, and is now, as you see, first lieutenant of this frigate. His mother has been residing some years in England, and having learned that there was a defect in the title to her West India property, she sailed for Halifax with her son in this frigate, where he left to take the packet to Jamaica, intending, after we had visited the coast of New York, to proceed to Kingston for the purpose of taking to England the late governor."

"You know the rest, sir! You have married an almost portionless bride; for the estate in England belongs with the title to Arthur, and are scarcely value enough for the rents to keep it in repair. In a word, you have married into a noble but impoverished family. If, however, you will visit England with Rose, as soon as you can do so consistently with your duties in America, you will be warmly received by me at my seat in Surrey, Barnwell Hall, though I am more at sea than on land; for I can't keep up two establishments!"

This was said with a smile and with a frankness which pleased Ralph, who answered:

"As I did not marry for money, my lord, I have all and more than I bargained for; for Rose has a mother and brother, which neither of us knew of; and a good wife is better than rubies, and love than gold!"

This matter being settled, in a day or two Ralph set sail in the Golden Feather for New York, accompanied by Mark as prize-master of the Scorpion; while the frigate, having repaired all damages, weighed anchor to continue her voyage—Arthur on board to transact his mother's affairs for her—to Jamaica. It was, however, agreed on by all parties that at the end of six months they should all manage to meet at Neville Abbey Manor, the ancestral seat of Arthur Percy, Earl of Neville.

We now follow the Golden Feather to America.

Seventeen days after her departure from Fayal, the privateer dropped anchor with her prize alongside of her off the Battery; and so soon did the news spread, that Ralph hardly had time to get on shore with his bride and the countess, and place them at the City Hotel, before a hundred boats were around the brigantine, and both vessel's decks crowded with people.

The same afternoon—three hours afterward—a carriage might have been seen driving rapidly past the Red Oak Inn. From it, eagerly looked the face of Rose, and she was pointing out the place to the countess. Ralph also surveyed the place eagerly.

"It is all shut up—and how desolate it is!" he said. "But go on, coachman!"

He was anxious to see his mother! Over the bridge rolled the coach with swift revolutions of its wheels, and in a few minutes drew up at the gate of the widow's cottage.

The mother of Ralph, hearing and not suspecting the cause, hastened to the door.

"Mother!" he cried, "here I am with Rose as my wife!"

The next moment she was clasped in the arms of both. The countess wept at the happy meeting; and being named as the new-found mother of Rose, was welcomed with fresh joy to the humble home.

When, that night, after all had retired but Ralph and his mother, he made known to her all his adventures and those of Rose, what joy and wonder filled her bosom!

"And then Rose is really the daughter of an earl and countess?"

"Yes, mother; and what is more, she is the queen of my heart!"

The next morning, while they were all at breakfast, a horseman spurred up to the door. He wore a foreign dress, and looked like a foreigner. There came following him swiftly on foot an Indian runner. The rider alighted, and in good English, but with a French accent, he said he had come with a message to Rose, the daughter of Adam Lee; that he had been to the inn, which was closed, but that some persons said she had just been seen in a carriage driving toward this place.

"I am Rose Lee, or was I?" answered Rose, advancing.

"Then this is for you!" he said, giving her a letter.

"Non!" ejaculated the young Indian; non,

not if she do not have the gold feather! The great chief said no one but the daughter who had the gold feather!"

"Here then is the golden feather!" answered Rose, as she smilingly drew forth from her bosom a slender case, and from it displayed the feather of gold, which the Delaware chief, seven years before, had given her.

The Indian no sooner beheld it than he made a low obeisance before her, pressed the feather to his lips, and said:

"Me your people! You be queen of my nation!"

"This letter will explain!" answered the courier.

It bore the seal of the Governor of Canada. The contents were rapidly scanned by the eyes of Rose, while Ralph read over her shoulder. It contained a document with signatures. The Indian names attesting the first signature, which was that of

"OS-OO-WA-BAH,
"Chief of the Delawares,
"In the Canadas."

The instrument was the last will and testament of this chief, wherein he not only made Rose, under the designation of "Golden Feather," the "queen of his people," whether in the United States or the Canadas, but the heiress of twenty thousand acres of reserved lands, which appertained to him."

The validity of the instrument was attested by the signature and seal of the governor of the province.

Shall we not here close our tale?

Behold how Rose enriches the noble family of her ancestors! for these lands soon became so valuable that Rose became the richest heiress in America.

Of course, Ralph shared with perfect equality her prosperity. He did not again go to sea, for all his time was occupied in managing his vast estates.

The next year they visited England. What a happy meeting! Young Lord Arthur (the spy) was presented with gold enough by his sister to recover all his lost estates, and to live in a style commensurate with his noble rank.

Lord Barnwell was not forgotten by the generous Rose, nor one of "the brave sixteen," who, through many and various delicate avenues became participators of her bounty, as they always were sharers of her friendship. Ralph would not remain in England; but leaving his brother-in-law, Arthur, the Earl of Neville, to enjoy the estate of his fathers in union with a lovely English girl, he erected a princely mansion in the midst of his Delaware estates on the lake, where he lived the "lord of the manor," happy and respected by all who knew him.

At length, he and Rose, after twenty years' happy life, were gathered to the world, where all life, whether of weal or woe, must end, having an only son, Mark Henry Turner, Esq., who, on the death of his Uncle Arthur, without issue succeeded to the title and estates in England, where he now resides. In commemoration of the incidents of this history, he has added, by permission of the royal herald, to his coat-of-arms a sea-gull, decorated with ribbons as a crest, and three golden feathers in a field gules in a quartering of the shield.

Farewell, good and evil, who have figured in these pages. Vice has received its recompense, and virtue its reward.

THE END.

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